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October, 1994
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THEY'RE BA-A-A-A-ACK!

Well, it was an idea whose time we thought had come. CD-ROM Entertainment, as you can no doubt tell by this package, has been reincorporated into the body of Computer Game Review. There are several reasons for this, but the primary one is that the computer gaming market changed and it changed rapidly. When we first created CD-ROM Entertainment as a separate magazine, a good amount of games were coming out on disk first, some with a CD-ROM version after. Now, almost everything is coming on CD-ROM, and a lot more games are coming CD-ROM exclusively. The idea was to have CGR cover disk-based software and CD-ROM cover (obviously) CD-ROM games, but it became more and more difficult to limit the coverage in CD-ROM and to find things to talk about in CGR. What it came down to was two choices, the first of which was, as you can see, to bring the CD-ROM Entertainment side of the magazines back into CGR and give you all of this information under one roof. This is what we decided to do.

OUR OTHER OPTION WAS TO TAKE CD-ROM ENTERTAINMENT AND FREE IT UP FROM CGR. . .

Our other option was to take CD-ROM Entertainment and free it up from CGR, putting it out on the newsstands all by itself, and then go back to covering CD-ROM titles in CGR. While this was a possibility, we didn't do it for one very obvious reason. We didn't think it was fair to you, the loyal reader, to have to spend an additional five bucks just to get a little more information. We can put that information into CGR and give you more value for your money.

THIS ISSUE IS THE FIRST TIME IN CGR HISTORY THAT I AM NOT ONE OF THE THREE REVIEWERS.

There were a lot of things I really liked about CD-ROM Entertainment magazine, and those things will be incorporated into CGR. In a sense, what we will be giving you every month is a combination of the positive aspects of both magazines. You'll still get the multi-person reviews, but you'll also start getting more information, more opinion and frankly more magazine for your dollar. The things that worked in CD-ROM will be implemented.

Those of you who have been reading us from the start will also notice one major difference between this month and the last few years. This issue is the first time in CGR history that I am not one of the three reviewers. It's been a decision that I've wanted to put into effect for some time now, not because I don't want to play the games (far from it), but because it was taking so much of my time. On top of the reviewing duties, I had the job of a staff writer and the job of the editor and the job of the assistant publisher, and it was getting to be too much. Something had to give, and what gave was the reviewing part of the job description. It's a bittersweet decision; I'll miss writing down my thoughts on all of those titles every month, but I will like the fact that I can spend more time with specific games now. To replace me in that role, we've brought over Tasos Kaiafas from CD-ROM Entertainment now that he has a couple of months and issues under his belt. Steven Greenlee (not to be confused with either the publisher or yours truly) from the CD-ROM mag will also be working on CGR, now in the position of the guy who does all of the interviews and a sizable chunk of the actual reporting on news and events in the industry. It's a good solution to the problem we were starting to have, and we think it's a good solution for you. Additionally, the series of stories about D.C. True's CyberJudas that was begun last month in CD-ROM Entertainment will now be continued in CGR.

IT'S A GOOD SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM WE WERE STARTING TO HAVE. . .

What you can look for in future issues are more feature stories that are related to the gaming community but not necessarily about one game or one company. We'll be investigating trends and important news that will not only keep you better informed about the games you play, but also will help you get more out of the games you are playing.

We hope that in the months ahead you will see us evolve into the gaming magazine that suits all of your needs and questions. As always, you can drop us a line and let us know what you think. I'll talk at you again in another 30 days. Have a good one.

STEVE HONEYWELL
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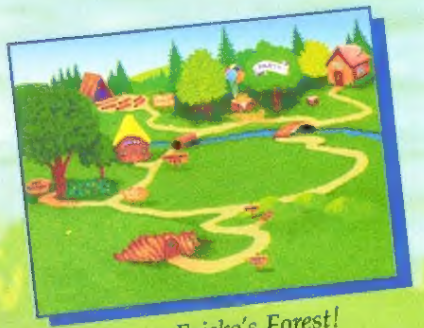
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CGR Features

Initialize 4
What's with this format of back in one magazine? Huh?

Postage Due 10
Lots of words of wisdom from readers all over the map.

CGR Reviews 20
Star Crusader, Iron Cross, Cannon Fodder, Alien Legacy and more.

Hardware 48
A sonic backpack, speakers, a joystick switch and a brace of sound cards.

Add-Ons and Alterations 56
Relive the original Woodstock and the D-Day invasion of Normandy.

Child Support 60
Learn to make your own movies and how to place the fifty states.

Computer Confidential 66
Arnie Katz takes a look at the final Summer Consumer Electronics Show

Dateline: Fandom 68
The best fanzines from here and there.

In The Works 70
What does Interplay have that SSI lost?

Q & A With the Game Doctor 74
The CyberSurgeon boots up for the Christmas season.

CGR Previews 76
DOOM II, The Incredible Machine 2, and some games that aren't sequels.

The CyberJudas Project, Part II 98
What do Shadow President '95 and the Chicago theater community have in common?

Under Silicon Assault 102
Avaloncon may be more than just a wargamers convention. . .

The Wing Commander Files 106
Interviews with some of the stars of Origin's upcoming mega-game.

Ruling with an Armored Fist 112
A short interview with Armored Fist co-creator John Garcia and more.

CGR Strategy 118
Hints for TIE Fighter, Dark Legions and Robinson's Requiem.

32

94

126

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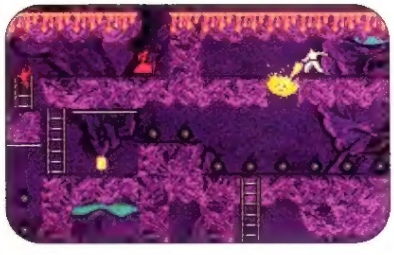

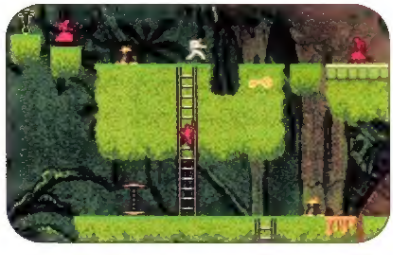

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CGR Contents

20

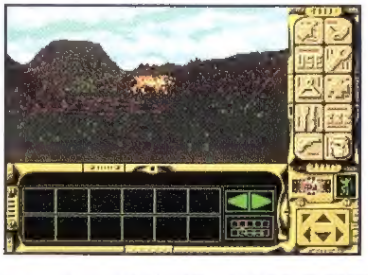
44

56

80

102

106



122

CGR Reviews

Alien Legacy by Dynamix 20
The Psychtron by Merit Software 24
Breakthru by Spectrum HoloByte 26
Mad Dog McCree II: The Lost Gold by American Laser Games 28
FIFA International Soccer by Electronic Arts 30
Star Crusader by Take 2 Interactive 32
ChessNet by Masque 36
Iron Cross by New World Computing 38
Sensory Overload by Reality Bytes 40
Beneath a Steel Sky by Virgin Games 42
Cannon Fodder by Virgin Games 44
Flight Simulator Toolkit World War II by Domark 46

CGR Previews

Wolf by Sanctuary Woods 76
The Incredible Machine 2 by Dynamix 78
Quarantine by Gametek 80
5th Fleet by Avalon Hill 85
Dominus by U.S. Gold 87
Reunion by Merit Software 89
Cyclemania by Accolade 90
Warcraft: Orcs and Humans by Blizzard Entertainment 92
DOOM II by id 94

CGR Strategy

Dark Legions by Strategic Simulations 118
Robinson's Requiem by ReadySoft 122
TIE Fighter by LucasArts 126

It takes a lot to be a spellcaster. Not everyone can cut it, you know. It takes years of training and a lot of frustration to be able to master even the simplest of spells. That's why almost all wizards have long white beards (well, okay. The male ones have long white beards). It's probably also why most wizards seem like they're in such a rotten mood all of the time. Working, slaving, studying diligently only to have failure after failure to show for it. So when they finally get a spell to work, they want to use it on someone. They can be single-minded about this. Take, for example, the wizards in Dark Legions from SSI (shown at right). They aren't much for magic missiles, they don't cast shields, they don't summon anything. They do, however, cast a heck of a freeze spell. SSI's Dark Legions offers an interesting blend of action and strategy all mixed together with top-notch graphics and sound. Practice against the computer, but play for real over the modem or network. We'll give you the ins and outs of how to win this game almost every time you play, provided you've got the manual dexterity, of course. Turn to page 118 to begin your lessons!

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REMEMBERING THE GAME. . .

I decided to write you again after buying my August copy and seeing my previous letter actually in print. After getting over the shock and childish glee of it happening, I managed to read the rest of the issue and benefit from the X-COM strategy. Thanks to Kevin for giving some help on that excellent game. All you readers should buy it and TIE Fighter; it will be a nice Game of the Year contest between the two. And Steve, so I was a little off on my Chicagoland geography. I guess I was paying more attention to computer games than mileage. But this is Computer Game Review, not Debate the Difference Between Two Illinois Cities Very Few Readers Have Heard of Monthly.

Again, I'll get to the real point of my letter, which in this installment is about the short life left of the 386 processor. I for one have a 386DX/40 with just 4MG RAM, and I'm finding it harder and harder to get games that will run decently on my system. As I recall, I saw somewhere not too long ago that the 386 is the IBM compatible computer most people have. I might be wrong, but there are a lot of us out there. All the companies are giving us loyal 386ers the boot, especially Origin. 486s only, Origin? Come on, give us a break. Have any of their 486-only games released been any good? Ultima VIII was a dud and Pacific Strike didn't exactly get good press. Are companies today focusing more on game play, AI and enjoyment or is it graphics, live video and marketing the game by making ads with enhanced pictures and nifty little buzzwords? It seems to be the latter anymore. I'm hearing more and more about companies from Fox to Playboy making interactive games. What's next? Johnson and Johnson launching an interactive game division? Is Band-Aid CD-ROM coming soon? It seems the computer game industry is being poisoned with stuff like this. What happened to the good old days of games running on just about any system, with cartoon-like graphics, adequate sounds and floppy disks? Take Wing Commander 3, for instance. I flipped through your preview/behind the scenes look at it, and it seems like Origin is focusing on the cut scenes and live action stuff more than the actual GAME. Couldn't they pack a CD or two with hundreds of missions and different paths, which takes about 5 times playing through to see all of the missions, instead of filling it with what looks to be unneeded live action crapola? It doesn't matter how well-known the actors are, how expensive and elaborate the set is, how lifelike the sounds are and how technologically advanced the graphics are if the game play sucks and if you can't tell how the game play is because it runs too slow on a Pentium or DX4. Companies need to slow down with the live action and the multi-polygon color-enhanced graphics with actors portraying the characters and live speech and every line spoken including the error line when it boots you back to DOS, and get back to the basic game.

Let's take a look at some of the best games of all time. First, Civilization. Did it have state of the art graphics and sound? Yeah, right, and Monkey Island is a simulation of primate raising. If the graphics were sub-par and so were the sounds. Why was it so great? Because it was FUN. Take Chuck Yeager's Air Combat, too. Was the flight model realistic? Did the graphics set standards? Was the ground drawn from satellite images from many miles up in space? No. Then why was it so good? Because it was fun. Today's companies do not seem to realize that the shipped product needs to be enjoyable. While graphics help, they don't make the game. I'd like to offer a little advice to companies. Make it playable, make it run on anything, and make it fun, and you'll have a hit. Guaranteed. Are games coming to that? Will I have to buy old games in the bargain bin because they are the only good games left that run on my system? I hope not.

Brian Burtz
St. Charles, IL

As this industry makes its inevitable headlong rush into CD-ROM gaming, the processor speed needed for a lot of the games will continue to rise. The 386, like the 286 before it, will go the way of the carrier pigeon. It's sad, but it's also a catch-22.

Game companies are expected to produce games that are visually exciting as well as fun to play. To make their products as visually compelling as the next company's, they need to develop the game for the same level of system. If company A makes a great game that looks tremendous and only runs on a 486 or better, you can bet that to make a similar splash, companies B through G are going to develop for the same level system.

There do seem to be a lot of interactive companies springing up, don't there?

It might not have been clear in that behind the scenes look at Wing Commander III, but a lot of work has gone into the game engine. It plays very well and is easy to control as well as pretty to look at. It's simply that that particular story was focusing on the process of the actual filming of the cut sequences, which will be interactive in many places.

VALUE-PAK OF OPINIONS. . .

First off, I'd like to say that your magazine is the best, greatest, most butt-kicking, stupendous computer game magazine of all ---eek---, I just looked in the mirror and my nose had turned this awful brown color.

OK, on with the letter. Like yourself, I am also somewhat ambivalent towards the Neverlock product. Personally, I have no problem with an unobtrusive manual lookup that makes you look up a word or symbol once or twice. On the other hand, I can appreciate a product like Neverlock if it would get rid of annoying copy protection such as code wheels, squint-until-your-eyes-go-bug-eyed-hard-to-read-code tables, and games that make you reload the game if you happen to mistype the proper word. I know some of you out there complain that copy protection is only affecting legitimate owners of the product and that it won't bother true pirates at all. This is very true, and I think the software companies realize this. What they are trying to do is stop the casual passing on of a product to a friend (after all, if you liked a game enough to pass

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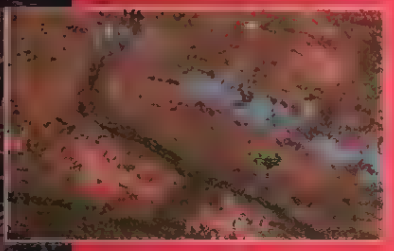

Shakespeare's great drama Henry VI recounts the War of the Roses throughout K... "Come, let us four to dinner. I dare say this quarrel will drink blood another day."

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The CGR Review Breakdown

All numerical scores are based on a 1-100 scale, with scores above 90 indicating a superior effort.

The numbers at the top of each review indicate how each reviewer felt the game rated on the five different areas. While these five scores are important in computing each reviewer's final score, they are in no way intended to necessarily average out to that particular reviewer's overall score, as these rated areas do not include all of the important factors that go into making a game both fun and rewarding to play. The overall score printed at the lower left of a given review is an average of each of the three reviewer's main score.

Games are reviewed on Myoda 386 and 486 PCs with a variety of sound and video cards as well as a number of different controllers. Macintosh games are played on a Quadra 800. All CD-ROM titles are played with double-speed CD-ROM drives.

THE CGR REVIEWERS. . .

Kevin: This has not been the most relaxing of months for Kevin. He spent the early part of the month at AvalonCon in Baltimore, gaming it up (and coming in fourth in the Blackbeard tournament) and the latter part of the month at TSR's GenCon. When he hasn't been working, he's been getting ready to get hitched. Still, he's managed to find the time to break down SSI's Dark Legions and he's borrowed his way into New World's Iron Cross as well. Hopefully, next month will be easier on him.

Ted: We haven't seen Ted around as much this month since he took a week off and hung around his old stomping grounds back in Ol' Virginny. Once back, he's been tearing apart one of the 486s to hook up all of the hardware. Always willing to go above and beyond the call of duty, Ted has taken it upon himself to spend virtually every free minute with Sierra/Dynamix's Alien Legacy. For all concerned, his ankle has healed nicely, and he rarely walks with a limp anymore. As he would no doubt say were he writing this, 'Thank God for that!'

Tasos: The newest member of the review crew, Tasos is the only one on staff to make the hellish commute every day from Indiana. But he's dedicated, and the Grateful Dead stickers on his car give him the inspiration to persevere. Tasos (drop the second "s" if you know him well), is a big fan of sports games, both real and on the computer, and holds the office record on virtually every Links 386 course available. He's spent too much time with Robinson's Requiem, at least when he wasn't in the process of driving in to work. The poor guy.

it on to them, you would likely have recommended it to them if you couldn't have copied it). Hopefully, one of the good aspects of the coming CD-ROM invasion is that it should put a damper on the piracy issue at least for 3 or 4 years.

While I agree with the list of pinball games you gave Michael Pope, Michael should also look at Silverball. I know CGR didn't give it a great rating, but I think you guys missed the boat on that one. For anyone with a Gravis Ultrasound, the Blood board has some of the best background music going.

Oh, just for the fun of it I give you wirelessvirtual3Dsurroundsoundmultiinteractivegouraudshaded doomesqueedutainmentreality. *[You forgot intuitive interface and point-and-click. -ed]*

I hate to slag a fellow Canadian, but for his comment about less fantasy role-playing, I hope a very big Shoemaker Levy 9-sized mountain falls on Trail B.C. (sorry all you residents of the northwest U.S. and B.C., but at least you'll know to blame Mike Glovier for his comments). The novelty of killing orcs never wears off. If Mike would have read this year's issues, he would have noticed the serious dearth of good (or for that matter, any) fantasy role-playing games this year. There are only so many times that you can play The Elder Scrolls and Ravenloft. As to your puzzler regarding if you kill a quantity of orcs "N," is Schrodinger's cat still alive after time "T," the answer is obvious to any elementary student who has had two or three classes in high level quantum physics. The answer, of course, is "depends" based on the completely variable release date of the next Wizardry. I know that you mentioned Wizardry and Might and Magic in your August issue, but anything further on possible release dates? Also, the correct symbol for representing orcs is omega.

You mentioned that one would have to kill you, Ted or Kevin to get your jobs. I have just two questions: 1) Does Illinois have a stalking law? and 2) You guys wouldn't happen to get Blackhawk tickets thrown in with the job, would you?

As usual, CGR has done a bang-up job of CES coverage. I do have a couple of complaints (you knew this was coming, didn't you?). While I enjoyed yours and Kevin's thoughts and gripes on the state of the industry, if you are going to limit each reviewer to a one-page summary, I would have much preferred that you kept it to your opinions on the best of the upcoming games. One final complaint to you, Steve, please don't push the idea of changing the double-speed CD-ROM drives to single. While you and I might know what happened, I will be spending all my time explaining to a neighbor to buy that double-speed as it is a newly named single-speed, whereas that expensive one that says double-speed is the old specification quad-speed. I can just see it now, "but what about that NEC one-and-a-half speed?"

Garry Myles
Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

One of the benefits of CD-ROM is, as you mention, the difficulty of piracy. Let's hope that puts an end to this nasty practice.

Well, I could have used the Ω symbol to represent the orcs in my little poser, but it requires me to change fonts, and it was a pain in the rear. Ok, ok I'm lying. I didn't think of it.

Illinois has a stalking law. No, we don't get Blackhawk tickets, and even if we did, who would want to go watch Bob Probert?

Regarding the gripe festival in the CES coverage, I personally felt it would be impossible to talk about the games without talking about what I perceive to be a shrinking awareness by many of the people in this industry with regard to the average game player. The perception is that we all want the wirelessvirtual. . .edutainmentreality that you mentioned, while the reality is that we simply want really good games.

I understand your pain with the single-speed etc. CD-ROM thing. Consider it dropped.

CD-ROM Rental. . .

First of all I would like to briefly suck up by saying I enjoy both Computer Game Review and the CD-ROM Entertainment supplement. In the Read Only Memory section of the August CD-ROM Entertainment, a reader wrote in and asked if there would ever be a way to rent CD-ROMs. You replied that a CD-ROM rental program would be hard to work around because the publisher would be wary. As a computer software magazine, I am surprised that you either didn't know about or didn't report on the hundreds of video software dealers across the country that are now offering CD-ROMs for rent. Blockbuster has 57 locations renting and selling CD-ROM software and plans to expand to hundreds more. In conjunction with my company, Entertainment Technologies, Ingram Entertainment has helped almost 300 video software dealers with CD-ROM rental programs. As for the software publishers being wary, Entertainment Technologies has signed agreements with over 40 publishers allowing our customers to rent their CD-ROM titles. Some of these include: Sierra, MicroProse/Spectrum HoloByte, Virgin, Paramount, Interplay, Media Vision, Software Toolworks, Viacom and dozens of others. Contrary to what some might think, CD-ROM publishers look at rental programs as a way for their customers to "try it before they buy it." A CD-ROM rental program solves several nagging problems for both the manufacturer and the customer. First, the manufacturer now has the access to the 30,000 video software dealers across the country and their customers. Second, customers will now have the ability to see for themselves if a product is worthwhile before shelling out their hard earned money. As to the copying issue, the average mom & dad who recently purchased their first multimedia computer is not likely to have either the

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inclination or knowledge necessary to copy a large CD-ROM title to their hard drive (not to mention the extra 2 Gigabytes of free hard drive space it would take to copy a title like Under a Killing Moon). There are, of course, many pitfalls to renting CD-ROMs but none that will not eventually be solved. We believe that CD-ROM rental will help the multimedia CD-ROM market to explode in much the same way that video tape rental did for movies in the early 80's.

Jeff Allen
Entertainment Technologies of Colorado, Inc.
Englewood, CO

I was, at the time, unaware of CD-ROM rental programs. Now, however, I have been shown the error of my ways

I am in agreement that a CD-ROM rental program is an excellent idea. I was of the opinion that it would be tough to do simply because there was huge opposition from game companies when the idea of video game rental crossed the boards a couple of years ago. I support the notion that rental can enhance game sales if the title is of sufficient quality. Additionally, I would think it would be too much trouble to pirate a CD-ROM game

DRAFTING. . .

I am approaching my senior year in high school. I have been computer gaming since 1986 and gaming since 1982. I have in my home two great machines that are outdated, which I hook up occasionally to play my old favorites such as Elite, the Bard's Tale games and Gunship. I'm a drafting student considering buying a PC, finally, after being a loyal Commodore person (having both C64 and Amiga models). My question is: what PC can I get (we're talking 486 here) that plays the latest games such as Ultima Pagan and Pacific Strike and the like? I'm talking something upgradable: I don't want to have a dinosaur two years after I get the thing. College is coming up and I'll need something for work there, too. All I want is something that stands strong in its spot and I don't want to ask a salesman about this. So, could you guys help me out a little because I won't be able to use the computers in the drafting lab forever and I can't always play games in there

You guys and Stone Temple Pilots rule!

Rabbi-El Dix
Newark, NJ

Uhh, actually, I'm more of a Meat Puppets fan myself.

The main issue to resolve when buying a new system, especially when jumping into a new market is that of price. How much are you willing to spend?

If money is no object or is a minor consideration, and you want the latest in CAD technology, a Pentium 100 should be the base system. It should be loaded with 16 Meg RAM and as big of a hard drive as you can locate. If money is an object, a Pentium-upgradable 486/66 is probably your best bet. If you go with an EISA machine, you can go higher on the RAM.

Bear in mind that you'll want a local bus machine, be it VESA, PCI or EISA. Steer clear of straight ISA machines Get a local bus disk controller and video card (with at least 2 Meg of VRAM) and whatever sound card suits your needs (it's hard to go wrong with Sound Blaster, although the AWE 32 is much more for musicians than gamers). Your monitor should have a dot pitch no greater than .28 and should be at least 15" and probably more like 17" or even 21".

Also bear in mind that we are hardly authorities on what is necessary to run quality CAD software. You really are pretty safe going to a reputable salesman (try for someone not on commission) since it's just not our area of expertise

TIED IN KNOTS. . .

IT CAME!!!! After waiting a hellish one year, three months, 17 days and 12 hours, TIE Fighter finally arrived at my favorite software store. Imagine my delight as I picked up the phone and was informed that TIE Fighter was in. I rushed over to the mall and bought my copy. What a game!!! If I had any doubt about Wing Commander II being better than X-Wing, there is no doubt about TIE Fighter being the best space simulator ever. Everything that was bad about X-Wing has been improved by TIE Fighter, such as. . .

1. As everyone knows, X-Wing's missions are extremely difficult, but TIE Fighter has three difficulty levels and you only have to accomplish a certain number of objectives.
2. X-Wing graphics are good, TIE Fighter graphics left me curled up in a ball under my desk saying "it's only a game, it's only a game."
3. The sound in X-Wing is average, the sound in TIE Fighter is absolutely unbelievable. The sound of the Star Destroyers, the lasers and the starfighters seem to take me to a movie theater. Great job on the music as well.
4. In X-Wing you had a choice to fly three fighters and B-Wing gave you the opportunity to fly another fighter, but TIE Fighter gives you six fighters to fly in. Plus, TIE Fighter gives you plenty more ships to fight against and defends, including star bases.
5. In X-Wing, you did not have the choice to load your own ordnance, yet TIE Fighter lets you choose missiles, torpedoes, rockets, bombs and more to load on to your ship.

I have a lot more to say, but the Rebels must be stopped. My closing statement is this: buy TIE Fighter!

Joe Foley
Hanford, CA

P.S. It's also nice to play the bad guy!

As you no doubt saw last month, our review of TIE Fighter was very enthusiastic. As you'll no doubt see in this month's issue there are five pages on LucasArts' latest game including hints for getting through the first two battles on the hard level of difficulty

I have to agree about the number of ships to attack, simply from an aesthetic point of view. It's cool to have multiple container and space station types to either attack or protect, and it dramatically increases the list of kills on a pilot's record. However, there was certainly some kind of accomplishment in X-Wing of having over 300 TIE Fighters alone on your personal kill list.

X-COMMUNICATION. . .

Let me start off by saying that your mag is the best when it comes to computer gaming coverage. I love your reviews and find that your reviewers usually come up with the same conclusions as I on all the games I've tried.

For example, take X-COM UFO Defense (which is the real reason for this letter). This game is outstanding. Great sound, great graphics, but above all, great play and strategy. Enough war games and fight sims, this is the type of game I want to see more of! When I first played it, I was on the edge of my seat. I felt like I was in the movie Aliens. There I am cleaning out a neighborhood infested with unknown horrors, not knowing what to expect next. Vasquez on my right with the heavy plasma and Hicks covering the rear with his laser rifle.

The imagination the creators put into the game is great, too. I love the alien autopsies and the technological advances. To top it all off, my next issue of CGR has five full pages dedicated to X-COM strategies. Not too much, for that would ruin the plot, which I have yet to finish, but just enough to give my troops better results on the field.

Thanks again for a great mag, and keep up the good work. Have any suggestions on what games I should buy next? Theme Park and Outpost look good.

Simon Roelandts
Palo Alto, CA

When Kevin wrote the five pages concerning X-COM, he made a conscious decision to avoid talking about the plot and for offering hints about what things to research first. Those decisions, made without knowledge of the consequences,are one of myriad reasons X-COM is such an incredibly good game. To give you advice on researching one weapon before another or to indicate important plot points would be akin to giving away the end of a movie. We hate when it's done to us, so we made the decision not to do it to you.

The one thing that X-COM does better than almost every other game around is produce that "what's gonna happen" feeling.

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MAC RPGS. . .

I have just read my first issue of your magazine, the supplement to CGR's August 1994. My hat's off to you. This is definitely among my list of Top 5 Computer Game Reviewers.

But the real reason for this letter does not have to do with complimenting your staff. Its subject is discontent with the game producers of the world. I own what is in my opinion one of the best vehicles in the Mac (is that a dirty word for you?) world of gaming. It is a Quadra 660AV with 8 MB of RAM with a dual-speed CD-ROM and the Apple Audiovision 14" monitor. Granted, it's no 486000 DX250 6000mHz wonder PC, but it's the greatest computer I've ever come across in a non-tower case.

My displeasure is based upon the fact that game manufacturers do not appease the Mac-users of the world. Myst is one which I was very happy to see hit the Mac market before PCs. It is definitely one of my favorites. But my unhappiness lies in the fact that there are virtually ZIPPO when it comes to Macintosh RPGs and other fantasy/medieval themed games. I had considered buying another comp (a PC, sigh) to be a dedicated game machine, but why shell out another $3000 when I have a perfectly capable computer sitting on my desk?

I was excited to see that Ready Soft has made Robinson's Requiem available for the Macintosh. I hope that other manufacturers will follow their example and start porting more CD-ROM (or any format for that matter) games over to the Mac. Is there a list or perhaps some way that you could provide information on what exactly is available for us Mac users? I surely hope so, since the game manufacturers are not as considerate.

And to end on a good note, I would like to let you know that due to this supplement I have decided to become a subscriber to CGR, with the hopes that CD-ROM Entertainment will be a monthly accompaniment.

Geoffrey Meyer
Thornton, CO

Well, as you've seen, the separate CD-ROM magazine was an idea whose time came and went. We hope that the accelerated CD-ROM coverage as well as an increase in interviews and other features will help incorporate the best parts of CD-ROM Entertainment back into CGR.

Regarding Mac games, you're right, and no, Macintosh is not a bad word to us. I am a Mac gamer at home, having shelled out the major bux for a system primarily used by my wife. We do some Mac reviewing, but our policy is to review the first edition of a game be it Mac or PC. For whatever reason, the games that do get ported over to the Mac are not of the RPG variety, although Take 2 Interactive is at work porting over MicroProse's Bloodnet for play on the Mac. It would be nice to see more publishers convert role-playing games for the Mac in the future. However, and this is a big part of the reason for the dearth of Mac RPGs this year, there haven't been a veritable flood of PC RPGs in 1994, so the die-hard PC role-players are suffering right along with you.

The future of the Macintosh with regard to gaming is not necessarily very certain. There are some companies making a large commitment to the Mac, and many still do much of their primary development on the Macintosh while other companies want nothing to do with the system. The future of the gaming market for the Mac will be determined by two things: how well Mac games sell over the next six to twelve months and the viability of the Power PC.

Obviously, with a Mac at home, I have a vested interest in wanting the Mac to continue to be a successful gaming platform. Many of the recent conversions, not the least of which is the new Links Pro Mac from Access, are in my opinion, superior to the PC versions. The best thing you can do as a Mac gamer is to write some letters to the companies that produce the games you want to see ported over to your system. Let them know you want to play their game but can't. And if they respond by creating a Mac version, support them by going out and buying it. Thanks for writing.

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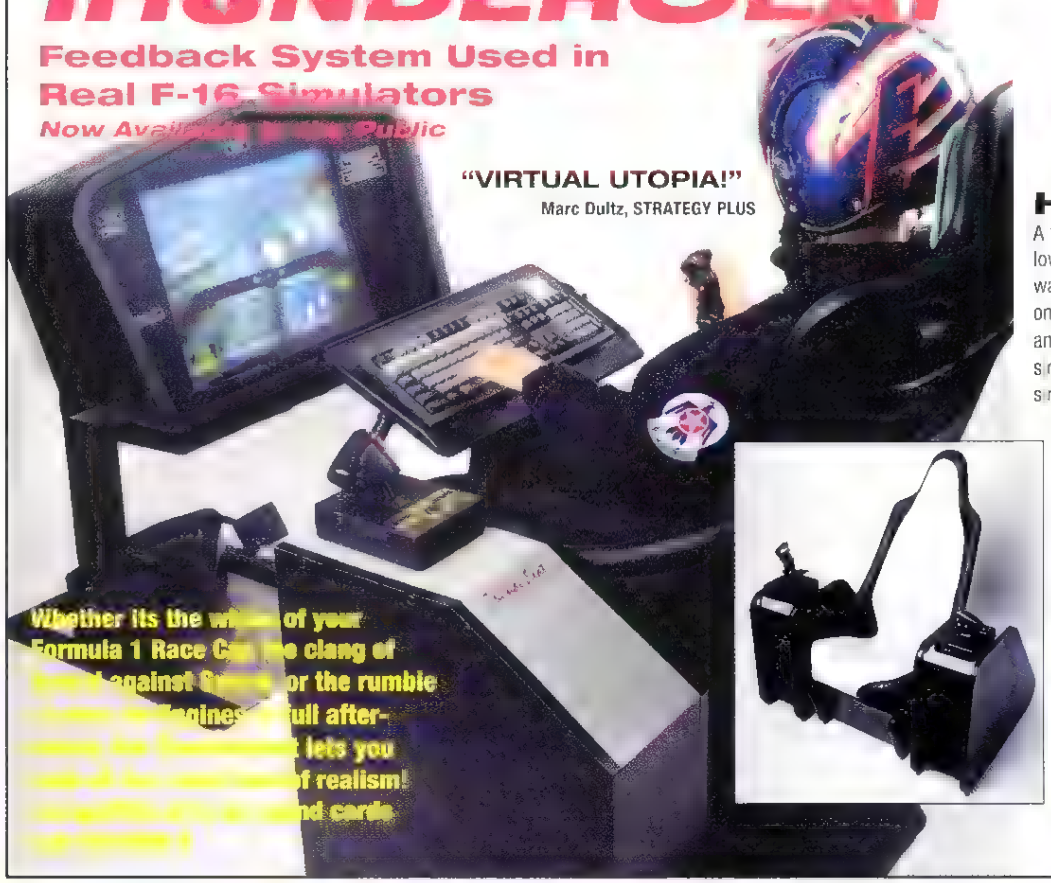

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5 AND COUNTING. . .

First things first: I would like to say that your magazine is the best computer magazine that I have seen. All the reviews and previews and strategies are the best. My brother subscribes and I read. I have five points that I would like to tell you (or ask you. Whatever.).

1) TIE Fighter will blow the pants off WC III. I mean, c'mon! X-Wing destroyed WC II (but took some heavy damage to itself) and T/F will just be better. Better graphics, an option that lets you ask questions during the briefing, orders changing during the missions, six new starfighters and a secret society that lets you learn about the Dark Side! Added challenge is flying without shields! All of these are big improvements.

2) Game Over. That's a big issue here. I didn't like or dislike game over. Every time I looked at it, I always thought "Hey, alright! That's a cool ending!" Then, a part of me got sad because the ending wouldn't be a surprise anymore. I'm sure you had your reasons to toss game over. I'll stand by your decision.

3) Now to deal with the man who said that multiple endings were not good WAKE UP, DUDE! The paths give you more game play! You said that you played a game for a month (30 days, mind you), then you obviously liked it! Get some more of the same game but not of the same puzzles!

4) I have two games that I really like on my family's PC. I want to know if you reviewed them and if they got a low score (and why if they did). The games are Merchant Colony and The Summoning

5) Do you know if Sierra is planning or is working on a King's Quest 7? I'm a big fan of the KQ series and I would love to have another one to play and beat (after many weeks of biting my nails and crying).

Stephen Pratt
Randolph A.F.B., TX

1) We shall see. Go to page 126 for this month's look at TIE Fighter

2) It still might come back, but if it does, it won't be until January.

3) Yup.

4) Merchant Colony was reviewed all the way back in June of 1992. It did not receive good marks. Uninspired graphics and difficult game play were the reasons cited. The Summoning, on the other hand, was reviewed in the November, 1992 issue and got very good marks across the board.

5) As you've no doubt seen by now, King's Quest 7 is in the works, and the graphics look tremendous. It's also probably CD-only.

FAREWELL TO AN OLD FRIEND. . .

I read your "Eulogy" column about the Commodore Amiga in the July issue of CD-ROM Entertainment and became depressed after thinking about something I hadn't in awhile, and I found your column to be 100% true.

I had an Amiga 500 from '87 or '88 up until its fall in 1991 or so. I used to be so proud of it and would laugh at my friends' 4-color PC-speaker games on their IBMs. Around '91 or so, it started to fade and I stuffed it away in a closet. . .now, recently I ironically purchased an IBM 486DX2/66 with an NEC triple-speed CD-ROM and other bells and whistles, and am very happy with it. It definitely is a shame that a computer like the Amiga with so much potential took such a harsh fall

Although, there was one thing that you neglected to mention in your column. Wasn't the "new Amiga CD32" game system that is set to debut soon going to have potential? Did that go down with the sunken ship of Commodore or was it co-owned somehow?

Also, I've heard rumors that an Amiga software emulator is set to debut on the PC. . .is that true?, or shall I bury all my priceless and classic games with the Amiga?

Matt Spinetta
San Rafael, CA

Like you, I have fond memories of the Amiga. While I never owned one, I did use to sell them, and at the time, I was strongly considering buying one. I was torn (at the time) between an Amiga 500 and an Atari 520ST. Looks like I was wise to save my money!

The CD32 is more than likely dust. Sure, it had potential. As for the emulator, I haven't heard. Even if one never comes out, there is no reason to toss your Amiga and the games you love. I still keep my Commodore 64 around at home because there are a lot of games I can't get anywhere for any other system, and I refuse to give them up. Besides, sometimes it's fun to dust off an old relic!

PERFECT TIMING. . .

I have been an enthusiastic reader of your magazine since it first appeared in the stores a few summers ago. I frequently have to spend long hours attending to patients in labor and in free moments, I work on my color laptop and read your publication.

Some time ago when you switched your subheading from 16-Bit to CD-ROM Enterta nment, I felt that you were right on the mark with the trend on how computer gaming was evolving. It is pretty evident to anyone who has followed the hobby and taken a look at the shelves in a software store that the quantity and the quality of the CD titles has risen dramatically over the past 2 years.

In your recent August, 1994 issue, Kevin Perry said we should 'read his fingertips--buy a CD-ROM' or else 'we wouldn't be playing any new computer games.' Steve Honeywell stated that 'everyone and their brother is headed down CD-ROM drive' and in order to play computer games, if we didn't have one, to 'go out and buy one.'

I think your own people have been speaking the truth, but the magazine on the whole has missed the boat. In splitting CGR into separate floppy and CD magazines, you have diluted the quality of the magazine as a whole, skirted the fact that CD games are no less computer games than those in disk form and probably made things more expensive for yourselves.

Computer Game Review just about states it all! Please reconsider merging the two entities back together: if you want to be new and innovative you might consider incorporating your own way of reviewing into a disk, enclosed with each magazine to highlight what is new and exciting.

Wishing you a prosperous venture,

Neil C. Blumenthal, M.D.
Phillipsburg, NJ

Never let it be said that we don't listen to our readers!

OUTPOST REVISITED. . .

Hello. I am writing you this letter in regards to Sierra On-Line's newest game called Outpost. To start out, I'm currently a member of the Imagination Network, where there is a lively debate going on about Outpost.

Most of the people arguing about the game are saying that the game is incomplete and that it shouldn't have been released until it was completely finished. Members are saying that they are upset about paying $50.00 for a game that isn't completed

I currently have Outpost and I do enjoy playing it. Sierra has stated that they will be releasing "PlanetPaks" that will fix most of the bugs in Outpost and give you all the features that were promised in the original game. Most of the members are also arguing that the game was advertised too much and they were expecting a great game that is better than SimCity 2000, but were let down.

As I stated before, I do enjoy the game and I'm looking forward to the "PlanetPaks" that will be coming out. I'm writing to get your opinion of the game. Your opinion on this matter would be greatly appreciated

R. J. Carnesi
Fullerton, CA

Your third paragraph says it all. The game shouldn't have been released with bugs, and if it was, they should be fixed for free. You shouldn't be asked to pay more for something you were promised and didn't get. Sierra can't be responsible for people's expectations, but they should be responsible for fixing the bugs promptly and making their customers satisfied with their product. I sure wasn't. Also, shouldn't they be fixing all the bugs, not just "most" of them?

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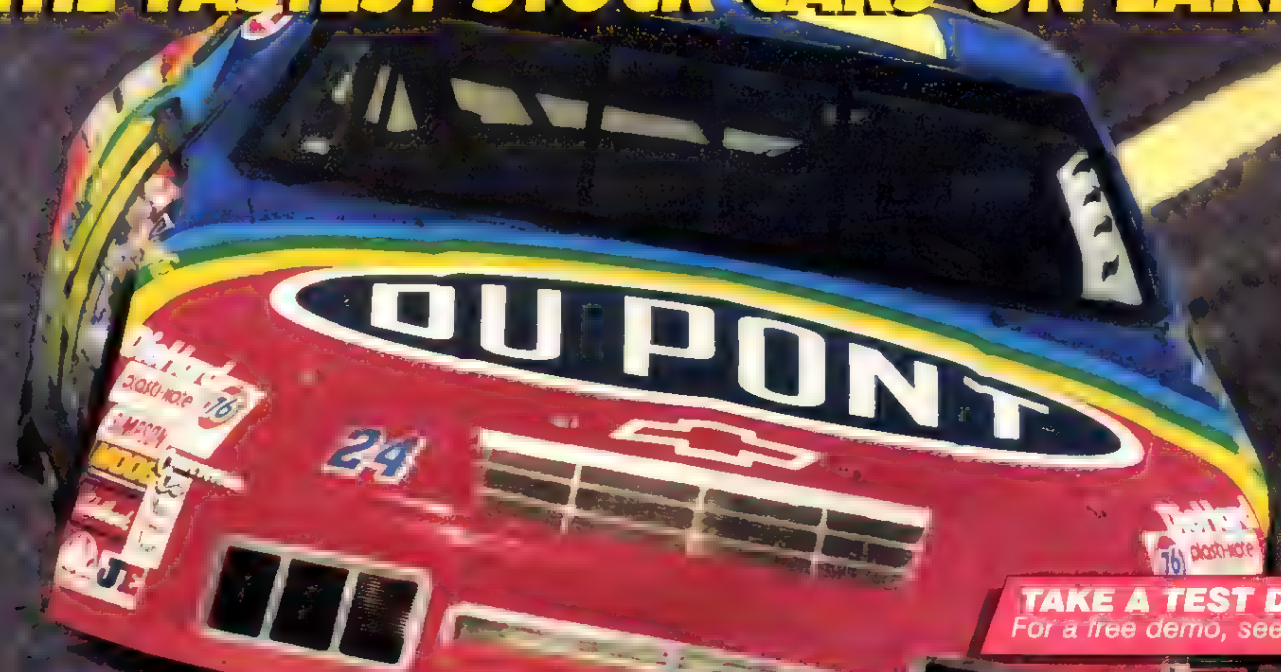

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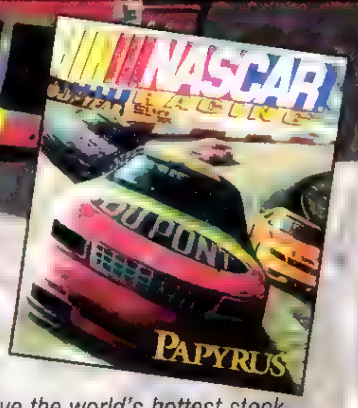

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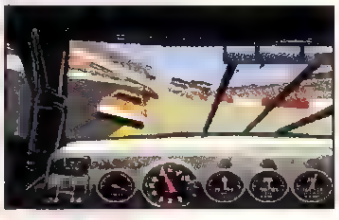

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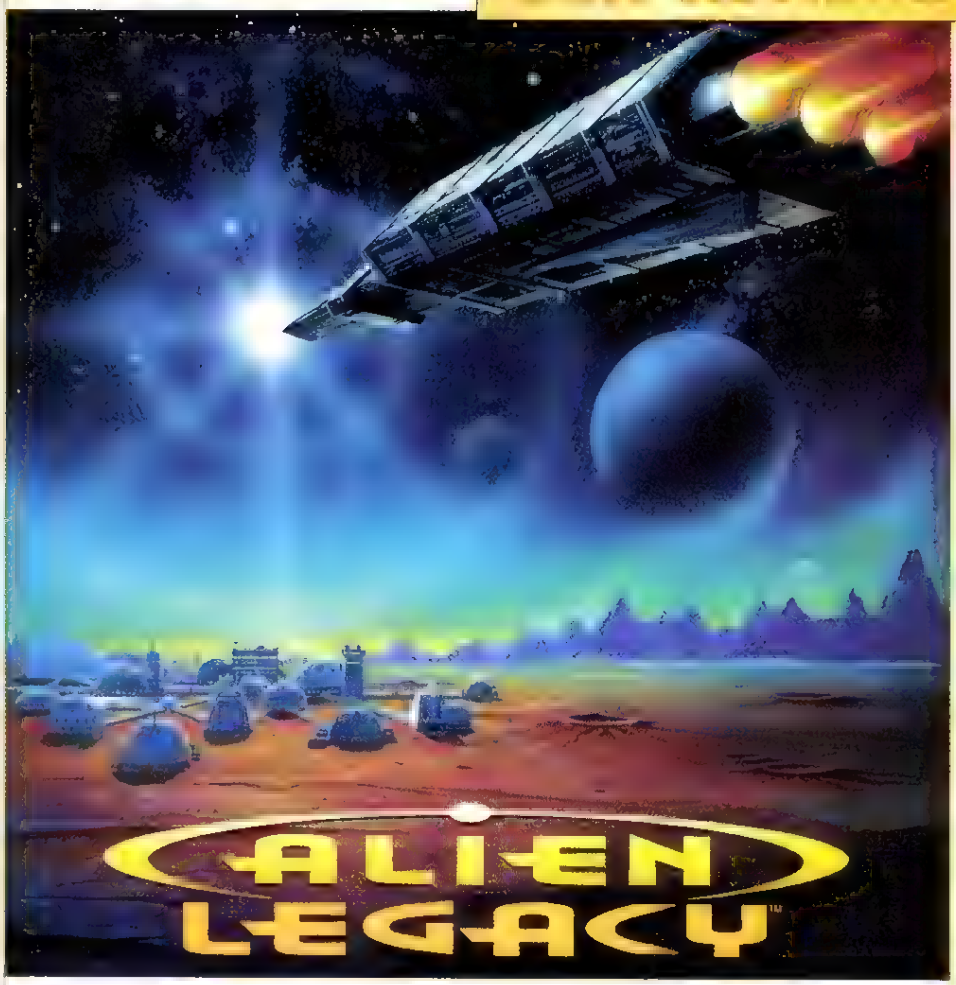
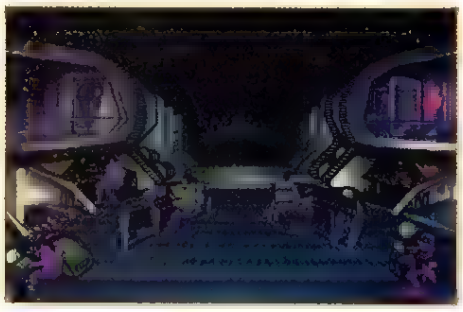


DISTRIBUTE EARTH'S SEED THROUGH AN ALIEN SOLAR SYSTEM.

JOE YBARRA, PRODUCER OF STARFLIGHT, RETURNS!



The nerve center of the Calypso is where you can ask your advisors for tips.

Alien Legacy

by Sierra On-Line

Game Summary

Search a solar system for clues about the aliens who destroyed Earth. Set up and manage colonies, helping them to become self-sustaining. Make tasty steaks from shiitake mushrooms.

Overall Rating: 88%

Requirements:	386, 4MB RAM, VGA, mouse
Sound Support:	Sound Blaster, AdLib, PAS, GUS
Controller:	Mouse
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Dynamix
Distributed by:	Sierra On-Line
Retail Price:	$45.95
Hard Drive Space:	19 Meg
No. of Players:	One player

THE SOFTWARE ROLODEX

Sierra On-Line

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Bellevue, WA 98015-8507
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The Shiitake Meat Synthesizer converts grain protein into meat protein. The process requires shiitake mushrooms, and the energy required to convert the protein is 20 times as great as that which is derived from the meat. Aside from being of historical curiosity, the process has no other redeeming value.
INVENT
LEAVE

You'll need to research new technologies; some will be worthwhile, others not.

In a plot twist of cosmic proportions, Earth has been drawn into a war with a vicious alien race. Scientists realized that the war might be a losing proposition, so a colonization plan was put into effect to send seedships to the far M-class suns known to have orbiting worlds. Put into deep-freeze, you are the commander of one of these seedships, the UNS Calypso.

Upon awakening, your message log reveals that Earth has been slagged. It also shows that a new breed of seedship was developed and sent out to the star system that your seedship is headed toward. Due to a quantum leap in technology, the new seedship Tantalus, though launched 16 years after the Calypso, should have reached the Beta Caeli system 21 years ahead of you. However, your scanners show no sign of the Tantalus or the colony site it was supposed to have founded.

Your mission now should be clear: you must discover what happened to the Tantalus. Along the way, you must seed worlds with new colonies and attempt to locate technologies left behind by the Tantalus. You'll need the engine designs specifically, but every little bit will help. Time is of the essence, as the aliens will surely notice your presence soon. Remain complacent for too long and you may discover yourself looking down the business end of some alien weaponry.

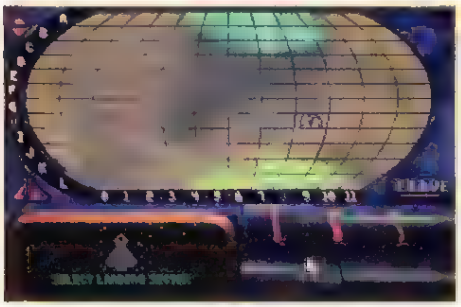
Joe Ybarra, the creator of Starflight and Yserbius, brings you a richly detailed game that blends elements of colonization, battle, exploration and technological innovation. You'll need to keep one step ahead of the alien race that dogs your metaphorical footsteps while keeping all your colonies prosperous (bear in mind that your seedship is essentially a colony, and that you'll need

Your advisors will keep you informed on any number of ongoing events.

Lasers will be one of your best friends as you progress through the game.

natural resources that cannot easily be had in space)

The game's interface is completely new, not a rip-off of another game. It is entirely mouse driven except for the directional controls for the exploration ship; the cursor keys can be used to control direction, but you'll probably only need them when you're in a combat mission. You have several people from which to ask advice or status of systems these advisors cover the areas of military, engineering, navigation and science. Occasionally they will take the initiative to offer advice, but most times you'll have to ask. There is also a robot advisor, but his job only covers the game options.



Exploration is the only way to gain the assets you need for technological research.

Game play is ever changing. Not only do you have to supervise military and exploratory missions yourself, you'll also have to take a hands-on approach to the design and layout of each colony. Colonies change as the population grows, as you develop newer and better technologies, you'll have to decide where and if you want to implement those technologies. Keep in mind that the game runs in real-time, so don't dawdle. If you waste time, the aliens will come a-hunting you.

The vehicle launch bay is where you'll spend a lot of time early in the game.

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
78	68	85	80	56

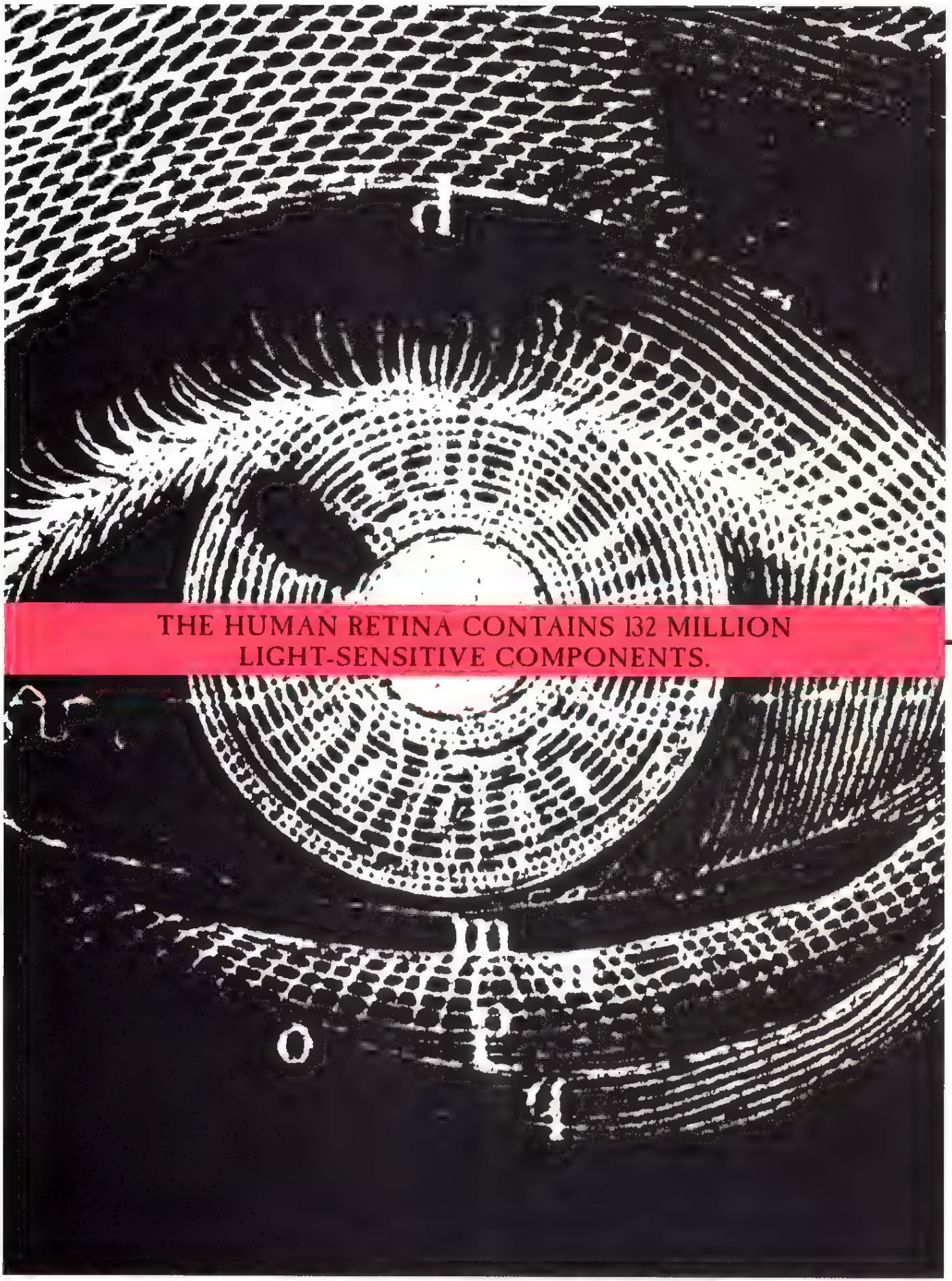
AL is the kind of game that advances so far in some directions that I feel disappointment all the more keenly when it slips up on other fronts. It's an ambitious design: space colony builder plus bona fide adventure and exploration elements. Striking the balance between plot development and player freedom is always difficult, and AL manages it better than most space opera-cum-spreadsheet games. The interface is strong and simple—at first. With extended play, however, the paradigm begins to break down. It's here that I began to feel mounting disappointment. The designers knew they had a game that threw a great deal of information at the player. They made some very good choices at how to handle that, and some very poor ones. The captain's PDA is a good choice (keeps important records with no fuss); the map of every single colony you build is a very poor choice (must hunt around large map for visual clues on the status of each facility). Consistent and detailed feedback is required from a detailed simulation, and that feedback is not always present in AL. While distances between planets change over time (logical and correct), no feature would alert me to perihelion, forcing me to check manually for the best launch windows. Once you build more than five colonies (and you must to advance because colony size is drastically limited; another very bad choice), proper logistics become nearly impossible. AL holds many, many hours of play for players who don't mind simultaneously managing a dozen colonies while fighting a war, all in semi-real time; I feel, however, that the management scheme needs an overhaul before AL becomes truly playable. ***-Kevin***

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
83	92	85	83	70

If you got suckered into buying Outpost, you're probably very wary of buying another space colonization game from Sierra. Put your fears aside. Alien Legacy plays well, and keeps you interested and intrigued. I think this has a lot to do with the game's designer. If you never played Starflight, you missed out on one of the best games (in my opinion) ever produced for the PC. Alien Legacy, while giving you only one solar system to explore, gives you so much game play that you tend to forget that the rest of the universe isn't included (knowing Joe Ybarra, though, you can probably expect to see some more of it in a sequel). The interface gave me some initial trouble, but this was mainly due to the manual's layout. The index is somewhat sparse in terms of specifics, but if you know how to access information using global variables, you should have no trouble with it. The graphics, while not of the photo-realistic variety, are very good. Sound and music are good, even though the music is strictly of the FM variety (a Sierra tech support person I spoke to said that MIDI support had a devilish tendency to lock up the game in beta versions). The manual doesn't specify whether the game ends after a certain number of turns or after certain conditions have been met, but you can count on getting into battle with the aliens before you get to the endgame. As he did with Starflight, Ybarra left the game open-ended: after you have received your final score, you can continue to play. Fortunately, Alien Legacy doesn't have the problem that Starflight ran into: once you finished Starflight, you had no place to go to sell the minerals and lifeforms you collected. ***-Ted***

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
89	93	84	80	88

Ever get the feeling that something big is going to happen and you're the only one that doesn't know about it? What's with all the space colonization games recently? Out of all of them, Alien Legacy might be one of the best. It doesn't take too long to learn how to get around, even though the manual is laden with a lot of keyboard commands that you have to wade through if you use a mouse. The advisors on the ship help to put you in the right direction by stating what they think you need to do. You can also access your PDA (Personal Data Assistant) from virtually anywhere to review reports and logs. There is often more than one way to get to a single screen, so keeping track of a lot of things at once is relatively effortless. Supervising colonies and buildings is not so easy though, because you have to visit them to check for any changes. For instance, if you build something, you won't know it is finished unless you check back. As the colonies grow, it can become a bit tedious. There are other menial tasks that you must perform yourself, like exploring a planet's surface sector by sector, but game time stops while you do. A nice feature is that you can have a vehicle pipeline from one colony to another to transfer goods back and forth—set how many times to run it or let it go infinitely. Resources are usually fairly abundant, making survival and prosperity not too hard to achieve. In fact, you can go well into a couple hundred turns in the game without having to worry about running low on anything. The graphics and sounds are good but nothing spectacular, which is not too important since the game play is engrossing enough to keep you entertained. ***-Tasos***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Mad Dog McCree

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Microcosm

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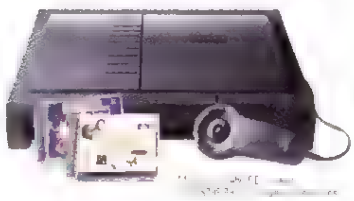


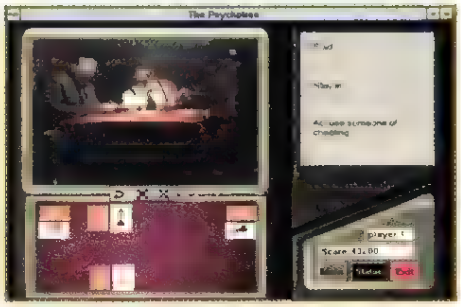
PHILIPS MEDIA

The Name of the Game is Treason. . . Ante Up!

The Psychotronic Generator can control people's minds. The Russkies want to sell it?! FOOLS!

Although the Cold War is over and the former U.S.S.R. has been dismantled, there still seems to be embedded in the American psyche a distrust of the Russian nation. When Joe McCarthy set out to purge the population of the insidious Red Menace, there had not been such an event in our nation's history since the Salem witch trials. But this evil image has mostly been formed by Hollywood in films where the Bear and the Eagle gnash and claw at one another through their steeliest spies.

Search through rooms for clues by watching the cursor change as it passes over hot spots.



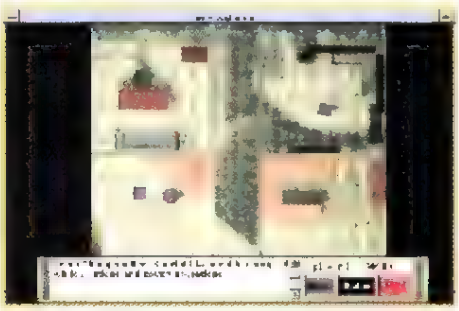
Gangsters can be very touchy when newcomers sit in on a few hands, so play your cards right.

The Psychotron uses that same theme, but gives it a nineties twist. The Soviets had researched and developed a device that allowed them to harness the forces of ESP, and thus control people. But now, with the collapse of the U.S.S.R., the Russians are broke and have decided to sell the Psychotronic Generator to the United States. Somewhere en route it vanishes, and it is up to you (as an FBI agent) to find it and capture the thieves.

The operation is extremely covert, as it is suspected that the theft may be the work of government agents. One, two, or four players can play at the same time to take turns interrogating witnesses and even playing cards with members of the Mafia. Snooping around different offices is certainly not beneath you since you need as much evidence as possible to catch these high-tech crooks.

If you ask the wrong questions or play your cards the wrong way, you could find yourself taken off the case or, even worse, dead. Do the right thing and you will be awarded a certain amount of points for your successes.

The video window can be enlarged to full screen for watching the more than one hour of video. Comedic actors are used to add an amusing element to the characters they portray for added entertainment.



Although you may not feel right about rummaging through offices of top CIA officials, do it anyway.

The Psychotron

by Merit Software

Game Summary

Interview witnesses, search for clues and take some mafia thugs for all they're worth to try to catch the thieves who have stolen a device that could threaten global peace if it falls into the wrong hands.

Overall Rating: 62%

Requirements:	486/25+, 2x CD-ROM, SVGA, 4MB RAM, Windows 3.1+
Sound Support:	Any Windows Sound System compatible card
Controller:	Mouse
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Merit Software
Distributed by:	Merit Software
Retail Price:	$69.95
Hard Drive Space:	8 Meg
No. of Players:	1, 2, or 4 players

The Software Rolodex

Merit Software

13707 Gamma Road
Dallas, TX 75244
(214) 385-2353
Fax. (214) 385-8205

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
75	60	82	86	20

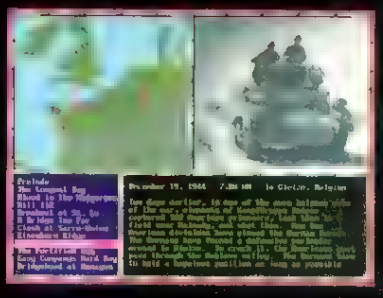
If you've ever wondered why the old Choose Your Own Adventure games have never returned under license, pick up this game and all will immediately become clear if you're older than 12. Psychotron is an intelligently written, well-acted game that suffers from an extremely linear plot and an utter lack of player control. If you like being led around by the nose and given only two or three choices at crucial plot junctures, you'll like this game. If you like "searching" for clues by moving a mouse around until it changes shape and having no control over the pace, direction or content of your investigaion, Psychotron is the game for you. Worst of all, the game will take you four hours to finish only if either your computer or your brain is extremely slow. Good concepts, poor execution. ***-Kevin***

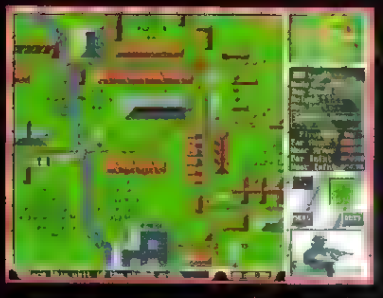
Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
73	61	83	89	15

While I'll admit that this game has a very interesting plot line, it was about as much fun as defragmenting my hard drive. You won't catch me complimenting the actors on their talent, but I do have to admit liking the music. One entertaining thing you can do with this game: since all the sounds are WAV files, make up your own to insert in their place! The full-motion video is somewhat grainy, but there are certain stylistic elements to the game that I enjoyed: the pan into each of the offices, for one thing. The game suffers from a branching plot line; only one path leads to a win, and you cannot veer from this path and still manage to win. I prefer much less linear games; if a game has to have a linear plot line, it should at least have some entertainment value. I couldn't seem to uncover much. ***-Ted***

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
80	65	75	88	45

While the concept might sound interesting, this game is not. Staged murder mysteries where the audience participates can make for a fun-filled evening. Although the Psychotron attempts to bring the same entertainment to your PC and allows for up to four players, the game is painfully slow and boring. The comedic actors are good for an occasional chuckle in between yawns, but are not substantial enough to carry your attention. The video production is of good quality, but it is a bit choppy when played on even a fast 486 system. If your patience has not been tried enough, put up with a crash every so often and you'll be begging for the end. Meanwhile, your friends will probably be urging you to load in something else to play, leaving you short on cash and long on aggravation. ***-Tasos***





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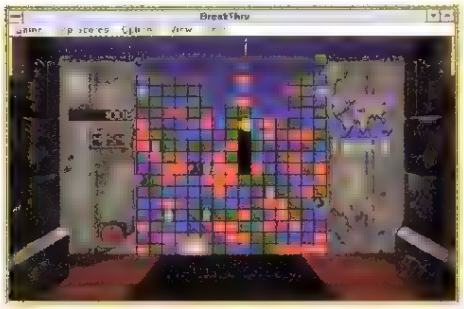
NEW WORLD COMPUTING®

Alexey Pajitnov strikes again!

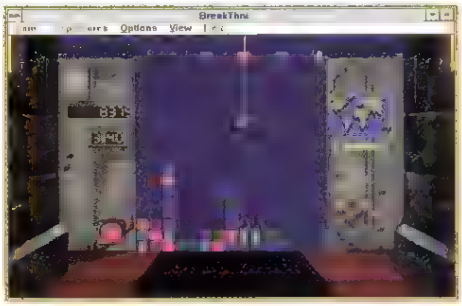
Wanton destruction is the rule of the day in the new brainteaser Breakthru.

A wall of multi-colored blocks stands before you, blocking your entrance to the city of Berlin. There amongst the blocks are various items which may help or hinder you: bombs, missiles, spiders, pop cans, etc. In order to gain entrance, you must reduce this wall to nothing by deducing certain strategic alignments; you may destroy any two or more like-colored blocks that are touching each other in one of the four cardinal directions.

This is the essence of Breakthru, the new puzzler from Tetris creator Alexey Pajitnov. The game is Windows-based and has configurable degrees of difficulty. Woe be to those who choose too nastily to play the hardest level with a two-minute time limit!



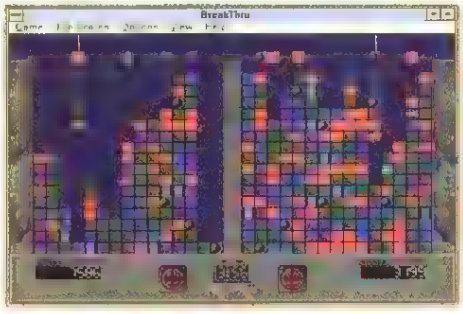
Part of the wall blocking entrance to Berlin is discarded with the click of a bomb.



Exposing the block grid will help the player set up additional blocks for the wall.

The object of the game is to clear four walls per city in as short a time as possible. There are four cities, then the game loops back to the first city and the levels get tougher. You need to look carefully at blocks you're clearing away in order to determine how the various columns will fall (the blocks are individual, not at all like the puzzle pieces for Tetris).

Special pieces within the game do unusual things. Rockets pointing in one of the four cardinal directions will clear out everything in a row or column in front of them, while special selector pieces let you clear one entire color from the board, whether they are touching other pieces of the same color or not. Spiders block the progress of falling pieces, but can be killed with rockets. Bombs must make their way all the way to the bottom of the wall before they can be detonated; once detonated, they will take out every piece that borders them. The exception to this rule is if a bomb falls on another bomb (or slides into it); then the bomb will detonate prematurely.



Head-to-head action helps step up the pace of the game.

Breakthru
by Spectrum HoloByte

Game Summary
Clear all the blocks from a game board within a certain time limit. Successfully complete one and the next level is even tougher. Use special pieces to help you achieve the end result: no more wall.

Overall Rating: 83%

Requirements:	Windows 3.1+, 386, 2MB RAM, VGA
Sound Support:	Any Windows Sound System compatible board
Controller:	Mouse
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Bulletproof Software
Distributed by:	Spectrum HoloByte
Street Price:	$40-45
Hard Drive Space:	5.5 Meg
No. of Players:	One player

The Software Rolodex

Spectrum HoloByte

2490 Mariner Square Loop
Alameda, CA 94501
(510) 522-3584
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Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
86	83	76	80	67

Well, let's get the headliner out of the way: it ain't Tetris, no matter what they tell you. It is reasonably engaging, however, and even has a Tetris-like feel to game play. The graphics are clear (except for the annoyance of similar colors during hard-level play: couldn't they have avoided using red and orange at the same time?) and the music is bouncy and "fun-loving." Does it entertain? Well, not really. . . but it distracts very well. I found myself relaxing with fifteen or twenty minutes of Breakthru after a hard day. If that's the kind of game you want, this'll do. Unfortunately, play quickly becomes fairly repetitive. At the higher levels, only the endgame is hard, and it's hard enough to frustrate you out of playing. Breakthru needs a slower difficulty curve and a compelling reason to play before it's truly a winner. ***-Kevin***

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
92	92	90	89	98

Unfortunately for Alexey Pajitnov, every game that he puts out gets compared to Tetris Breakthru, hopefully, will be the exception. It is a deviously simple game, requiring concentration and the ability to quickly deduce patterns in your mind. It is also addictive. The four-city revolving background quickly gets old, but, after all, it's only a background. I tried playing Breakthru on its hardest setting with a two minute time limit; my success at this level of play so far is two walls cleared. Breakthru is the sort of game that you load up for thirty minutes to an hour, then walk away from. Unlike Tetris (doh!), Breakthru will not keep you hopelessly mesmerized for hours and hours. On the other hand, you'll find it useful for whiling away those afternoons when you just don't feel productive. ***-Ted***

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
90	90	90	90	90

Liking Tetris will not necessarily determine if you like Breakthru. The games are somewhat similar in that there is gravity and there are different colored blocks and that you have to build to destroy. Time runs backwards in Breakthru, though, as you have a time limit, and that is the only way to lose. Unlike Tetris things do not start to get real interesting until the end, when you only have a few blocks left to eliminate. At the start you really have to be quick about whittling the blocks down to a few so there is not much time to stop and plan. The extra tools like bombs and missiles, and obstacles like spiders and tin cans make the game play more dynamic and interesting. With cooperative, competitive and dual wall play, the game can be played by two players in more than one way for added variety. ***-Tasos***

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It's the Old West we all remember from countless spaghetti westerns. It consists mostly of endless sunbaked prairies, filled with craggy rocks, cacti, and whooping painted savages whose only aim in life is to fill gunslingers with arrows. This bleak terrain is broken only by towns consisting only of a saloon, a doctor's office, and a house of ill repute, all manufactured out of candy-glass windows and breakaway railings. Into this bold but dusty landscape strides a looooooone hero: you.

Mad Dog McCree is one tough lookin' hombre, but that red bandanna could be his Achilles Heal.

Mad Dog II

by American Laser Games

Game Summary

Run amuck in the Old West with little concern for anti-violence statutes or ammo carrying capacities, blowing away bad guys with vital organs only two pixels large. Blame your mouse driver for your failures.

Overall Rating: 75%

Requirements:	386sx-25 or faster, 640k RAM CD-ROM Drive (150KB/sec)
Sound Support:	Sound Blaster and compatibles
Controller:	Mouse
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	American Laser Games
Distributed by:	IBM
Retail Price:	$47.99
Hard Drive Space:	5 Meg
No. of Players:	One player

The Software Rolodex

American Laser Games
4801 Lincoln Road NE
Albuquerque, NM 87109
(505) 880-1718
(505) 880-1557

After the bad guys get shot, they often play out a very dramatic death scene.

As in previous American Laser Games productions, the player aims a trusty pistol around the screen with the mouse while digitized footage (and lots of it) play by. Bad guys will appear in various locations and try to send the player to the grizzled but wisecracking undertaker. By clicking on the attacking bandito, renegade or outlaw, the player expends ammo and undesirables. Reloading the weapon (a frequent action, given the tremendous amount of lead flying around) is as simple as dragging the mouse to the lower corner of the screen and right clicking.

This simple procedure (aim, kill miscreants reload) occurs in dozens of scenes, taking place in every cliche-ridden Western backdrop: moving trains, stagecoaches, saloons, missions, and more. Nigh unto hundreds of bad guys seize the opportunity to hurl themselves off cliffs, upper stories and saloon railings after being shot. Often, they'll pick out exciting trajectories for their expiring frames (down several flights of stairs) before popping up.

Along the way, the player can save at any point; that's a wise move, given the carnage. Also, the player can choose one of three guides and therefore paths through the game, adding replay value. But the ultimate battle awaits—the longest interactive battle sequence ever filmed.

If your aim is off or you reload too slow, the undertaker will be the last guy you see.

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
80	93	92	86	20

If you know and like this series of games, pay no attention to my review here. For everybody else, this is the same game that you've seen in the arcades, only with pixelized graphics. Move your mouse around. Shoot bad guys. Hoo. I'm sorry, but I don't find this amusing for more than about five minutes. This is not far off from the intent of the designers, apparently, because the game only takes about thirty-five minutes or so to play through—and most of that time is spent loading and reloading from the one save spot provided. It's worsened by the fact that many of the bad guys require being shot in one exact spot, about one pixel wide. Thus, it frustrates me as well as bores me. If you like the MDM arcade games, though, this is an excellent home conversion. It just isn't for me. **-Kevin**

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
88	91	94	94	50

Even though it seems kind of hokey (no offense to Virginia Tech), Mad Dog McCree 2 is a pretty enjoyable arcade-type shooter. The live-action video actually works for this game, and the sound is excellent (if you have to play a sequence over and over though, it does get a little annoying). The varying guides help keep this game interesting, and each path can be played in about half-an-hour (if you're really good) to an hour-and-a-half (if your hand-eye coordination is a bit lacking). The only problem I had is in the conversion from arcade to PC, but it's a niggling one at best. The arcade game had a light pistol that was simple to use and reload; there is no such peripheral for the PC, and the mouse simply takes a little too much precision to use when playing on the hardest level. **-Ted**

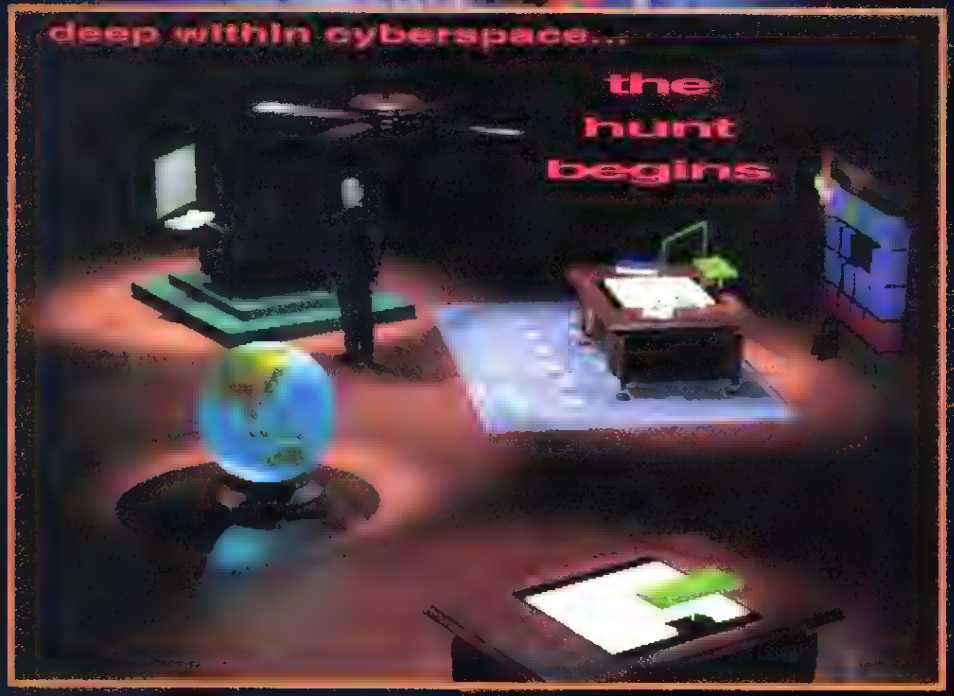
Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
91	75	89	97	80

If handguns could be fired using a mouse should mice be banned? Probably not, because they would not be too accurate. At least they do not work well in MD II. Even on the Wimp level you usually have to shoot pretty accurately to score a hit and your timing leaves little room for error. At times it can get frustrating, and you'll be restoring often. But the video quality is good and the cinematography even better. The characters are amusing and the settings are very authentic looking. Along with three different difficulty settings you can also choose from among three different guides to vary the scenes you play in. Other than that, it's just shoot your way to Mad Dog and have it out with him to get the gold. The whole game runs almost completely off of the CD with only 5 meg resident on the hard drive. **-Tasos**

CyberJudas

The Sequel to SHADOW PRESIDENT™

YOU ARE THE PRESIDENT AND THE PREY



Coming Fall△1994
For PC CD-ROM

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Merit Software™
Dallas, Texas 800-238-4277

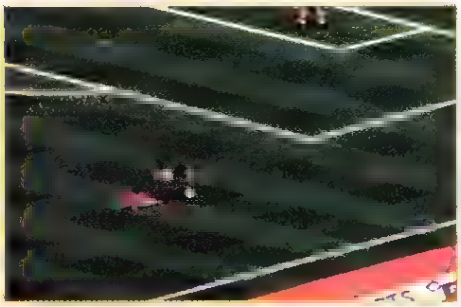
SOCCER HAS NEVER HAD IT SO GOOD.

ELECTRONIC ARTS' FIFA INTERNATIONAL SOCCER HELPS CGR OVERCOME ITS WORLD CUP NAUSEA.

Did the World Cup have any influence on U.S sports watchers? A lot of software companies have been betting that Joe Average Computer Gamer has had his interest piqued enough to want to play a simulated version of the real thing. The problem, to date, has been that the software hasn't been able to deliver the quality of experience that most gamers look for.

Now comes EA Sports' latest endeavor. The back of the box says, "Finally, world class soccer." And they may just be right. EA teamed up with FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association), the governing body of international soccer, in order to bring this product to life. An interesting addition to this game is corporate sponsors. When goals are scored, there is a chance that you will see a scoreboard with an Adidas Predator ad or a Panasonic ad.

Your players will shoot on goal automatically–no aiming is necessary.



Slide tackles are an important part of the game. Just make sure you do them legally!

All forty-eight teams that make up FIFA are included, though the names of the players have been changed to protect EA against lawsuits. Team statistics have been boiled down so that you can take in a team's effectiveness on the field without having to pull out your slide rule. But the team statistics still hold, in general, for each of the teams represented. You'll be able to choose from the famous—Brazil, Cameroon, and Germany—to the less famous—Wales, Albania and Iraq. There's also a team, the EA All-Stars, who've apparently had their stats cribbed from the Almighty.

There are an impressive number of options, such as grass or artificial turf, different weather, exhibition or tournament play and team strategy and formation. Slide tackles, headers, bicycle kicks and heel passes lend realism to the game. For those gamers who want to go head-to-head, there is a two player option.

Control the ball with a well-timed header, then bicycle kick it out to a teammate for a shot on goal!

FIFA International Soccer

by Electronic Arts

Game Summary

World class soccer action from the word go. Simple interface, sampled crowd chants from actual international tournaments, detailed graphics, and more animations than any other sports game.

Overall Rating: 88%

Requirements:	386-25, 4MB RAM, DOS 5.0, VGA
Sound Support:	Sound Blaster, AdLib, Roland, PAS
Controller:	Joystick, keyboard
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Electronic Arts
Distributed by:	Electronic Arts
Retail Price:	$59.95
Hard Drive Space:	8 Meg
No. of Players:	1-2 players

THE SOFTWARE ROLODEX

Electronic Arts

1450 Fashion Island Blvd
San Mateo, CA 94404-2064
(415) 571-7171
Fax. (415) 570-5137

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
80	91	89	81	76

FIFA Soccer truly achieves the look of real soccer. It does this, unfortunately, by reducing the player's level of control dramatically. When the action button is pushed, the player kicks the ball in the proper direction, period. Thus, it's impossible to make a stupid play; but it's also difficult to make a brilliant one. If you sit back and watch someone else play FIFA, it looks like TV. Players elbow each other, scissor and head nicely, and in general look professional. During actual play, however, most of this stuff is automatic. You control the general flow of play, and that's about it. That said, it's still the least frustrating of the soccer games I've seen: a good team can beat a bad team fairly reliably. The ancillary features are strong as well (plenty of teams, nice replay). EASN turns in another good product. **-Kevin**

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
90	89	92	86	94

At last, a soccer game that is not so bogged down in its own sense of self-importance that it actually succeeds at being good. Not only is control simple and straightforward, I could actually tell what was going on on the screen. Whereas other games rely on the computer's judgment to put you in control of the player nearest the ball, FIFA Soccer actually lets you choose from any player on the field, with the exception of the goalie (although there is a 'dumb default'). Graphics are exceptional, while sound is merely good. Whoever wrote the keyboard riffs for the music should be taken out and given a good, solid flogging, though. The player animations are incredibly detailed, taken directly from the video game. FIFA is fun, and you won't catch me faulting it for being simple to play. **-Ted**

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
81	78	86	77	95

As computer gamers know, the World Cup brought more to this country than just a lot of fanatical soccer fans. Many European companies also shipped over their new soccer games. EA may have missed the boat, or the bus since they're American, but at least they did not miss the point. Realism can take a back seat to fun and still make a product successful. FIFA-IS may not be the most realistic soccer game, but it is probably the most enjoyable of the lot this year. The controls are simple yet the players movements are complex. There truly seems to be a good AI at work here. The same button will cause players to do a variety of moves as appropriate, from bicycle kicks to headers. The stats are basic, but the laughs and surprises that were generated during play make it worthwhile. **-Tasos**

DOOM
On CD
3.5" disks
& Compatible.
Hell on Earth is here.
Rejoice.
In the annals of computer entertainment, there's no game that had the rave following quite like DOOM.
There's also no game that's quite as breathlessly awaited as its sequel.
Well, go ahead and suck in some air. Because DOOM II: Hell on Earth is here! And because it'll be a cold day in hell before you can breathe easily again once you start playing DOOM II.
This time, you'll wage war against the entire forces of Hell. Bigger, nastier, deadlier demons and monsters. More powerful weapons. More mind-blowing explosions and more of the bloodiest, fiercest, most awesome action-packed blastfest you've ever experienced!
If you've played DOOM, stop reading and haul ass to the nearest game store now. If you haven't, we can only say (respectfully, of course): Go to hell.
id SOFTWARE
Visit your local software retailer today, or call 1-800-362-9400.
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STEP INTO REAL POWER MANAGEMENT.

THE GORENES GOT MORE THEN THEY BARGAINED FOR WHEN THEY SET FOOT IN THE ASCALON RIFT.

Many empires have risen and fallen throughout the history of the Earth. Even though their dominance seemed insurmountable, some small flaw in their fanatical plans caused them to lose their grip. Maybe it was nothing more then the power of the human spirit in each oppressed nation to liberate itself from foreign rule. How strong would that power be if it were planetary?

In Star Crusader, the most powerful and advanced race in the known universe have set out to promulgate their manifest destiny. They believe their role to be that of liberators and educators. The success of their methods is evidence enough that their mission is to convert other alien races to their ways. The aliens of the Ascalon Rift think not.

The Rift is inhabited by five races, each one different in their own right. One common thread that now uneasily ties them together is the cessation of the Gorenes presence in the region. The Gorenes have encountered some of the most troublesome defiance from them and are constructing an enormous base and battle station called Prajna-7 on the outskirts of the Rift.

Closer to the alien territories the Gorenes have built three smaller bases to command strategic operations. They have been given three months to drive the opposing alien forces back and force their surrender. If the Ascalon Rift alliance allows Prajna-7 to be completed in the allotted six months, the Gorenes will have the power to take the region

Until that time, the Gorenes will have limited resources, ships and weapons at their disposal. But events begin to unfold and circumstances change in unexpected ways. Your conscience may begin to take over your loyalty to the Empire as you struggle to decide who is right and who is wrong. Perhaps your loyalty will win out and you will stay with the

In the Mission Briefing Auditorium you can access information about the enemy ships.

Although the cockpits vary from ship to ship, they all are basically the same.

Star Crusader
by Take 2 Interactive

Game Summary

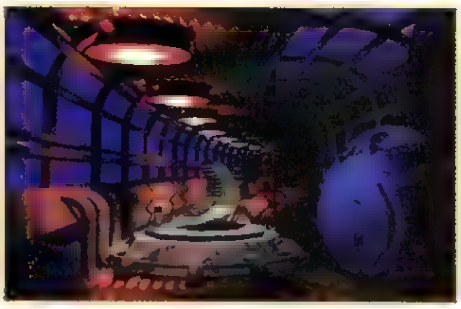
Fly missions for the side you choose to fight for in an interstellar war. Thirteen different ships with a variety of strengths and weaknesses are used in over 100 different missions.

Overall Rating: 91%

Requirements:	386+, 2MB RAM, VGA 2x CD-ROM drive (CD version)
Sound Support:	Roland, Ad Lib, Sound Blaster, Pro Audio Spectrum
Controller:	Mouse, Joystick or Keyboard
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Take 2 Interactive
Distributed by:	Gametek
Retail Price:	$59.99 Floppy or $69.99 CD
Hard Drive Space:	8.4 Meg (full install)
No. of Players:	One player

THE SOFTWARE ROLODEX

Take 2 Interactive Software
1004 Ligonier St
3rd Floor
Latrobe, PA 15650
(412) 539-3077
Fax: (412) 539-3195

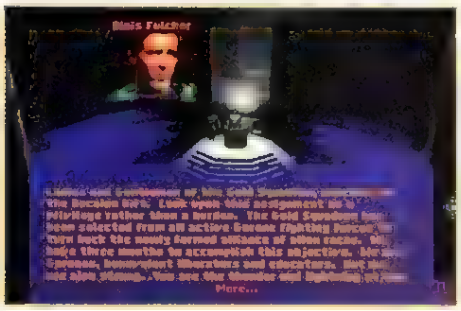


The Simulator gives you the opportunity to learn the functions of a variety of ships.

Gorenes Or maybe you will decide that what the Gorenes are doing should be stopped and decide to switch sides to fight with the alliance

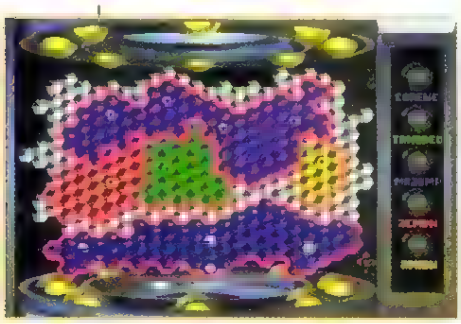
On each mission you will be given one of a variety of ships to fly. The flight simulator will give you the opportunity to take it out for a few spins to test its limitations and learn its strengths. To see how it performs against other craft, you can choose which ships to combat and how many. As you capture enemy ships, you can fly against them or climb into one yourself

The Mission Briefing Auditorium is the place where your Tactical Commander will explain the goals you must complete or the diplomatic effect of



Blois Fletcher, the Tactical Commander, will brief you on the goals of each mission.

the last mission. The Pre-Mission Computer Room provides access to various command functions, as well as a General Topics Database. Before you start a mission you should know the ship you are flying and its controls well. Not all missions are seek and destroy, some require you to use the stealth abilities of a ship called the Intruder Even if you do not succeed in a mission the game does not end. But too many failures—or death—will bring everything to a swift finale



To see how the Empire is doing, check the Tactical Map for the latest information.

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
83	87	85	80	63

SC is an earnestly designed addendum to the space pilot hero genre as typified by the Wing Commander series. That's not an unfair comparison; in SC you play a square-jawed hero and watch him act in the cinematics, much as Bluehair does in the WC series. Both progress along tree-branch plotlines, with mission success and failure determining paths. But rest assured it's a different game. The universe seems bigger, since there are more alien races to fly against, each with its own set of special weapons (my favorite: the vector cannon, which knocks the target off trajectory). The designers have obvious influences from other sci-fi games, like Star Fleet Battles, in the nomenclature and effects of these weapons. SC plays like its own game, however, and plays pretty well. I really like the power allocation dynamic, as well as the component-repair damage system. You can actually damage bits of enemy fighters rather than just blowing them up. From a technical standpoint, SC is a dream, running smoothly on nearly any 486, even with 4 Meg of RAM, even off the CD. Other designers take note: this is the kind of performance that we have to have to support this CD revolution. In with these kudos must go a few knocks, though. The graphics, while colorful, are not sharp and are often dim. The storyline is compelling, but I felt constrained by my character rather than empathizing with him. The training simulator is a brilliant idea, since it allows unlimited and variable combats. All in all, SC may strike you as a third-party space flight sim at first; but its depth of play and innovations will likely win through most objections. ***-Kevin***

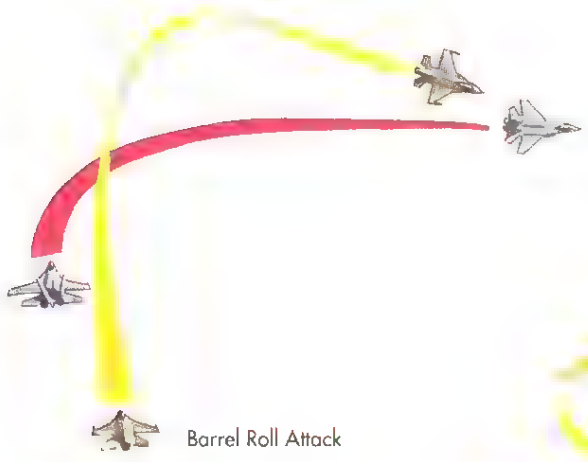
Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
84	95	85	87	80

While Star Crusader doesn't have the graphical flair of a game like X-Wing, it sure is fun to play. One of the key elements is the storyline, which progresses based on how you fare against the enemy. The branching plot helps keep things interesting: there are many paths that lead to a technical win or bitter defeat, but there is only one path to a triumph. The beauty of this is the depth, in that you won't necessarily know that you've taken a wrong turn until you are many missions past the branch. Star Crusader feels like a real space opera, in that there are several races who have formed a somewhat shaky alliance, and—important note here—they all have different ships of differing strengths and varying sizes. While I'm sure many of you are saying, "Well, yeah. So what?" try to think of another game of this ilk that has done this. The only real problem I had was with the interface in moving around the base. The flight simulator should save your settings if you fail a simulated mission; it's a real pain to have to select the same setup every time. A 'Re-fly Mission' button would have been a real bonus here. However, the flight interface is very good, and the ability to change your craft's power management and repair hierarchy helps make Star Crusader a much more challenging and interesting game. When you advance in rank to become a command officer you'll gain access to the command functions of a base (selecting wingmen and mission resources, reassigning wingmen to instruct at the space academy, etc.). Trust me—this is something you'll want to your very core. Star Crusader is a good game and worth the price of admission. ***-Ted***

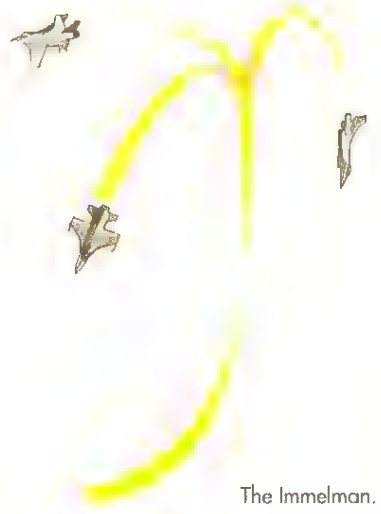
Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
89	92	85	96	93

You're a pilot with some galactic military force and have to fly missions. So what's new? Well for one thing your pilot serves the Gorene Empire who want to take over every civilization in the universe...for their own good of course. Secondly, SC lets you question the motive of the top brass since at some point in the game you realize that they do not always do what they promise. Yes, you can become a traitor and defect to the side of the Alliance or remain loyal regardless of the morality of your actions. Unlike other games of this type the plot is revealed in more places than just between missions. Sometimes the game stops in the middle of a mission to show an animated clip with or without your character. Although the animations of the characters conversing are not the most attractive and somewhat clunky, they serve their purpose and the speech sounds good. The flight simulator does not have the smoothest graphics, but the controls are in a standard configuration and the computer pilots are pretty tough. One nice feature is that you can configure the available power to the different systems on the ship in a priority list that can be changed at any time. All of the different ships have basically the same cockpit layout, but their abilities vary. The worst function on the ships is the radar screen that shows a silhouette of craft in the area and differentiates them as the enemy by their color. There is also a radar that shows when you have your target centered and its distance from you. The problem is that both radars are two-dimensional, so you cannot tell whether an enemy is below, above or behind you, a big problem in three-dimensional space. ***-Tasos***

Maneuvers commonly performed with new Wingman Extreme.

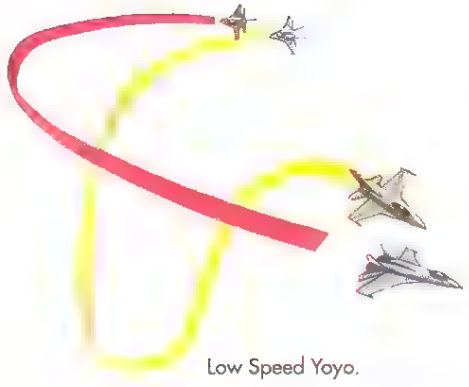


Barrel Roll Attack

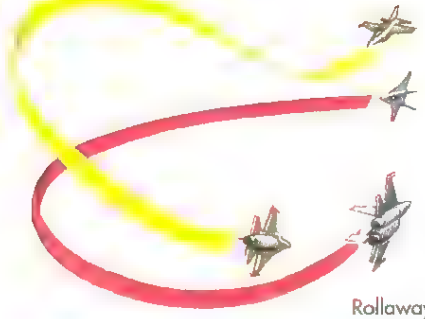


The Immelman.

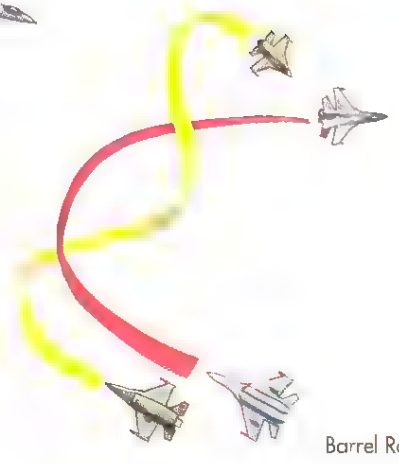
Offset Head-on Pass



Low Speed Yoyo.

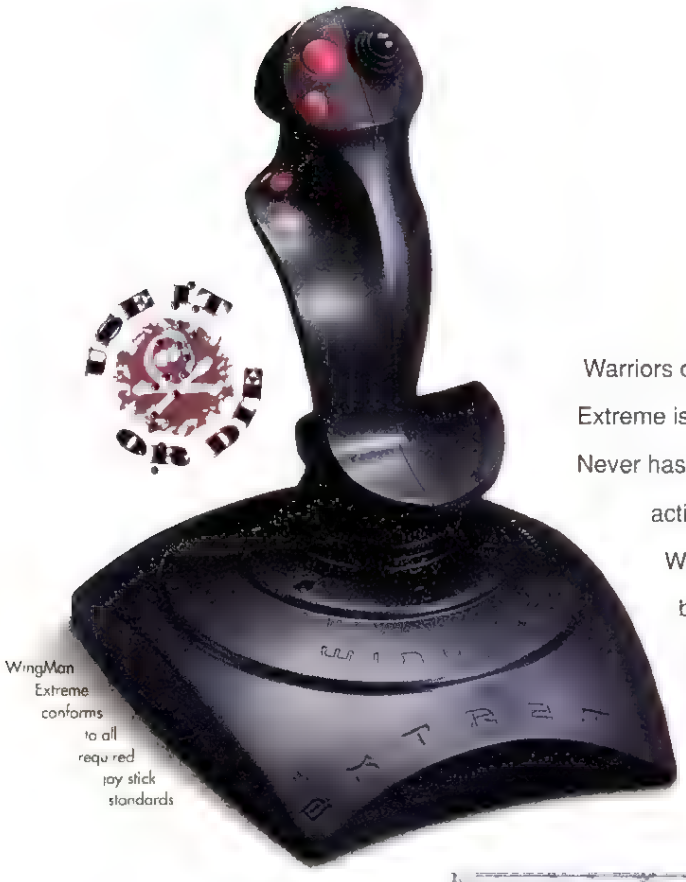


Rollaway.



Barrel Roll

Maneuvers commonly performed with other Joysticks.



WingMan Extreme conforms to all required joy stick standards

Warriors of the cyber skies rejoice: project WingMan Extreme is complete, the joystick has been perfected. Never has guidance control been so fluid, trigger action so responsive, view control so easy. WingMan Extreme can be the difference between the thrill of victory and the ejection seat of defeat: a solid professional in a field of puny lightweights. WingMan Extreme is waiting at your dealer, or call 1 800 889 0039 or fax back at 1 800 245 0000.

LOGITECH

New WingMan Extreme.

THE JOYSTICK WITH ATTITUDE!

PRICE COSTCO SOFTWARE ETC inmac BEST BUY

The King is Dead, Long Live the King!

Knights, castles and pawns are moving across the ether with ChessNet from Masque.

Okay, let's see a show of hands: how many of you out there play chess? Now, how many of you have access to a modem, a network, and/or the Internet? Now you can satisfy the urge to play a game whenever you want with Masque Publishing's ChessNet.

ChessNet is a rather unique offering. It allows networked or modemed players to have up to eight games going simultaneously (club edition only), complete with a countdown clock and a chat feature. Taunt your opponent mercilessly (although this is frowned upon by most serious chess organizations as being somewhat childish. But who cares?) as you drag him around the board. But one of the truly beautiful things about ChessNet is its Internet play. You get all the full-featured graphics of its single-player and network play. The only caveat is that your Internet access must be dedicated. Most four-year universities have such access.

If you would like to replay the moves of a game you can go as far back as you like.

The computer opponent can be very challenging, even on the easier levels.

In single-player mode, ChessNet provides a range of skill levels. The lowest skill setting would be appropriate for novices. The computer makes its decisions rather hastily in this mode, often allowing pieces to be killed outright if they can at least be traded, say a knight for a pawn. Higher skill levels increase the challenge in quantum leaps. the computer plays well at level two, and astonishingly at level six.

If you have to quit in the middle of a match all the pertinent information about the match can be saved, then reloaded when you are ready to start again. So if your opponent can't be on line at the same time as you, you can emulate a play-by-mail scheme where one of you moves, saves the data, then the other player loads the data and moves, ad infinitum. This can be handy for avoiding the snooping eyes of your boss.

The game screen can be customized to any color you like, as can the board squares, for that designer look.

ChessNet
by Masque Publishing

Game Summary

Chess with a twist. It can be played in single-player mode, but also supports network, modem and even Internet play (must have a dedicated connection). Six levels of computer AI.

Overall Rating: 89%

Requirements:	Windows 3.1+, 2MB RAM
Sound Support:	No sound
Controller:	Mouse
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Jack Lerner/Masque
Distributed by:	Gametek (US)
Retail Price:	$19.99 (single); $49.99 (club)
Hard Drive Space:	1.5 Meg
No. of Players:	One or two players

The Software Rolodex

Masque Publishing

P.O. Box 5223
Englewood, CO 80155
(800) 765-4223
Fax: (303) 290- 6303

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
76	70	24	N/A	89

One of the biggest complaints about computer chess games (from experts, anyway) is the AI. ChessNet neatly dodges that question by providing several million opponents worldwide. Need to play a master? Just find one on the Net who is willing to play you. With the variety of connection options available, there's no reason to complain about ChessNet. The native AI can beat me handily at level 2 of 6; but I'm no master. Now don't go into this thinking that ChessNet is a massive multimedia experience; as the pictures plainly show, graphics are functional at best and sound consists pretty much only of the default beep. Still, this isn't the kind of game that gets bought for its 3-D rendered graphics. For chess against remote opponents, it beats the heck out of play-by-mail; it's functional beyond that. ***-Kevin***

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
91	95	85	N/A	95

I enjoy a good game of chess whenever I can find an opponent with a skill level about equal to my own or a little higher. This used to mean playing whenever I got together with my brother, but now I can simply modem him. ChessNet is an excellent piece of software; the AI is very good and the interface is easy to understand. Despite my distaste for Windows games, you really can't find a better platform for graphically static games of skill like this. I particularly like the inclusion of a chat feature. The extended chat allows you to ask your opponent about his strategy (if the game is a friendly one), while the one-liner chat feature is strictly for taunting. Admittedly, I like using the one-liner better, but the extended is nice for those times when I'm learning from a more advanced player. ***-Ted***

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
85	88	85	N/A	95

Yes, there are a lot of computer chess games on the market, but not like this one. For starters, the computer opponent is very good and fast, even on the easy levels. But if it's a human opponent that you want, ChessNet gives you plenty of ways to dial up a friend and easily play up to eight different games at once. To chat while playing you can simply send a one liner for a quick insult or use the extended version to say more. If that's not enough, you can even play a music CD while playing a game. The pieces, the board and almost everything can be customized to any of 256 colors that you want. In fact, almost every aspect of the game can be altered to your tastes and specs. There are no animations, nor is there a variety of piece sets—this is a chess player's chess game. ***-Tasos***

THE

LETHAL SERIES

Are you frustrated with your joystick cause it's just not meeting the demands of your favorite PC games? Does it lack that extra thrust you need to overtake the enemy? Is it missing that pinpoint accuracy and superior control? Well, don't get mad. Get LETHAL!

The Lethal Series by QuickShot is a new line of quality game controllers for the IBM and compatible PC. With features like built-in throttle control, positive response fire buttons, and high-speed turbo-fire capability, the Lethal Series will meet your need for speed, accuracy, and control. So experience the difference with the Lethal Series.

QuickShot

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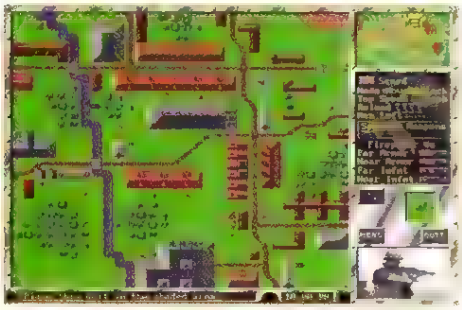
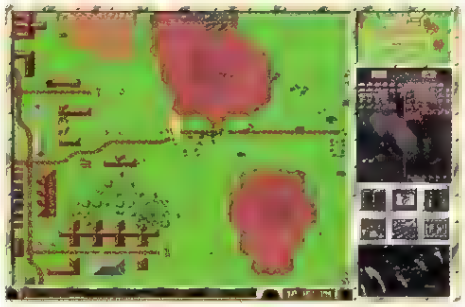
The Fall of the Third Reich Begins. . .

Iron Cross lets you trample across the European countryside in realtime.

New World Computing, the company that brought us the Might and Magic series of RPGs, takes a big step sideways with Iron Cross. A military simulation covering the invasion of Normandy and the weeks that followed, Iron Cross puts the player in command of either the Allied or Nazi forces. Running in realtime, you'll command tanks, ground assault forces, and anti-tank, howitzer and mortar batteries, as well as calling in air strikes and artillery barrages.



Thick villages provide needed cover for the lightly-armored infantry units.



Watch air strikes smite thy enemies as they try to squeeze through a narrow valley.

A total of twelve different scenarios will take you to the towns of Caen and St. Lo; you'll be charged with defending and attacking bridge sites, overrunning strategic positions, and simple wholesale slaughter. Terrain types you'll encounter include hills, fields, plains, rivers and trees; each presents its own unique obstacles to travel.

Most of the weapons that were available historically are included, and each has its own graphic representation. If you ever run into difficulty distinguishing unit types (say, machine gun squads vs. flame-thrower squads), a simple mouse-click will help you unravel the mystery. And, unlike most wargames, you get to choose not only what pieces you can place, but where you'll place them, too.

AI ranges from 'crippled' to 'no prayer,' and, just like you, it gets to set up its part of the board. Don't make the mistake of believing that by placing the same units in the same places when replaying a scenario will yield similar results; it's 99.999% guaranteed that you'll never see the same enemy setup twice. Even on its crippled setting, the computer still stands a strong chance of overpowering you, and 'no prayer' will leave you with exactly that.

Select your forces with care, as you can never quite be certain what forces you'll face.

Iron Cross
by New World Computing

Game Summary

Relive some of the high and lowlights of World War II in Europe. Determine the troops you want to lead into battle and the strategy to lead them to victory. Watch little tanks get blown up.

Overall Rating: 90%

Requirements:	386 or better, 4MB RAM SVGA, MS-DOS 5.0+
Sound Support:	Most major sound cards
Controller:	Mouse
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	New World Computing
Distributed by:	New World Computing
Retail Price:	$69.95
Hard Drive Space:	7.5 Meg
No. of Players:	One player

The Software Rolodex

New World Computing

29800 Agoura Rd., Suite 200
Agoura Hills, CA 91301
(818) 889-5600
Fax (818) 889-5682

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
75	88	86	80	92

Despite its faults, this game really got to me. There's something wonderfully visceral about watching the shells explode around my troops as I order them forward to take that bridge or that hamlet. There aren't enough scenarios, and given the engine, a builder should really have been included. The interface is touchy in places, and some basic refinements need to be made for it (better scrolling for the main map would be my first choice). But frankly, I don't care. The game is just fun. I love wargames that let your build your own force; IC requires it in otherwise historically based scenarios. IC also shows (rather harshly) the necessity of the combined arms approach, but it illustrates the point operationally, rather than by rules doctrine. Solid fun for a wargaming fan, and probably others as well. **-Kevin**

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
84	92	91	91	95

Despite some interface oversights, Iron Cross stands to leave New World Computing laughing all the way to the bank. It is graphically and sonically pleasing; individual elements are easily picked out by eye, and the sounds of battle will leave your ears ringing long after you've turned off your PC. While wargame fanatics will surely decry the lack of some of the more esoteric elements of World War II, armchair warriors will be more than pleased with the game's depth of play, as well as its ease of play. Like Harpoon 2, Iron Cross can't be described by the term wargame; rather, it's a military simulation since it takes place in realtime. The game's AI is quite good; as I stepped through its levels, I got more and more thoroughly thrashed by it. Add this game to your Christmas list. **-Ted**

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
94	88	87	96	91

If you have to have military training to play a war game then the hard-core fans can keep it. IC is not like that. The setup and subsequent control of the units is simple. Place the units inside of a certain zone and then give each one a path to follow and a general command like move only or attack first and move second. To win a scenario you must have a unit inside of the victory zones when time expires. That's all there is to it. The SVGA graphics add some nice detail to the bird's eye view above the battle field, and the explosive sounds make it realistic. The specs on each unit are a simple plus/minus bar for each category so you don't have to be a General to understand them. Although is runs in real time, it is easy to stop the game for as long as you want to alter your strategy and give different orders. **-Tasos**

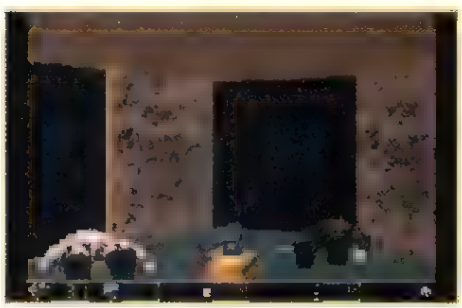
HELL
A CYBERPUNK THRILLER
STARRING
DENNIS HOPPER
STEPHANIE SEYMOUR
GRACE JONES
GEOFFREY HOLDER
AVAILABLE THIS HALLOWEEN
GAMETEK
TAKE 2

THERE ARE NO EXPENDABLE CIA AGENTS...HA!

REALITY BYTES GIVES MAC USERS ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIENCE A REALISTIC ARCADE ACTION GAME.

Since Wolfenstein-like games have been created using a multitude of different themes and settings for the PC, it would not take an expert to predict that there would soon be some for the Mac. Well, here's one.

As a CIA agent, you were assigned to be the test subject of a device called the AlphaChannel video transmitter that was supposed to enhance your memory, and relax your mind and body, but all it seemed to do was give you splitting headaches.



There is a choice between a regular view or a full-screen that gives you a larger viewing perspective.

Sensory Overload
by Reality Bytes

Game Summary

As a CIA agent, your brain has been used to test a new device. When you wake up, all of the hospital orderlies are dead and it is up to you to survive attacks by terrorist guards and find the cause of the destruction.

Overall Rating: 81%

Requirements:	Mac IIsi (68030-20MHz) or faster System 6.0.7 or higher
Sound Support:	N/A System 7 for music playback
Controller:	Mouse, Keyboard or Joystick
Available for:	Macintosh
Designed by:	Reality Bytes
Distributed by:	Reality Bytes
Retail Price:	$69.99
Hard Drive Space:	8 Meg
No. of Players:	One player

THE SOFTWARE ROLODEX

Reality Bytes
One Kendall Square
Suite 2200
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 621-1555
(617) 577-1209

Unlike its predecessors, SO allows you to use both hands simultaneously for twice the punch.

You suddenly wake up after one session and find the room littered with the dead bodies of hospital orderlies. As you search the corridors for any clues that might help you discover the reason for this horror, you realize that the guards are not too friendly. At the start you have nothing to use but your fist and brawn. After taking out a couple of the guards, you get a pistol with limited ammo. Your search will continue to turn up more objects that will aid you on your quest, so don't pass up any room or passage. When you complete a level, there will be an elevator to take you down to the next one. If you feel that you forgot something, you can return. The whole building is there for you to explore. Grope the walls for secret doors if you have the time.

Your primary objective is to find the AlphaChannel device and Dr. Craven, its creator. The answers will be there, but first you have enough trigger-happy terrorist guards to get out of your way that the game will keep your adrenaline pumping through to the end.

Sensory Overload gives Mac users some well-needed arcade action and the chance to experience the fun and gripping suspense that can only be found in 3D first-person games. Although it is very similar in function and form to the id creations, SO adds some interesting and unique touches.

SO uses some good 3D rendered graphics and shadowing to add to the realistic element.

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
79	81	80	80	56

Well, if you can't wait for the Macintosh version of Wolfenstein, this will help action fans pass the time. It is true that decent action games are few and far between for the Mac; but that's all this one is, a decent game. It combines the obligatory new features (like grenades and a proximity detector) with the obligatory old features (miles of identical corridors filled with cardboard enemies). There's nothing particularly objectionable about any part of this game, but there's nothing to recommend it exceptionally either. It is not a conversion like many other Mac games; it's designed exclusively for Mac platforms. That might make a difference for certain MacSnobs. It makes pretenses to a plot, but that's not the point. Shoot the mindless baddies and collect more weapons. You've been here before. ***-Kevin***

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
84	83	81	81	79

Mac users can now rejoice that they are able to play a Wolfenstein-like game on their systems. Sensory Overload is an enjoyable game that is sure to please MacFolks. The half-mouse, half-keyboard interface is unusual but doesn't present an incredibly steep nimbleness curve. Graphics are decent, but don't expect them to be Myst-like; this is, after all, a disk-based action game, not a CD-ROM adventure game. Sound is standard fare for these types of games: it's good, but it won't corrupt your eardrums. The one thing this game gets high marks for is its quality of play; it's very difficult to win. My only complaint is that, sometimes when you take a clean, square shot at an enemy, said enemy walks away with nary a flesh wound. Clear this up with a patch, okay, guys? ***-Ted***

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
66	71	82	88	86

Not much more than an enhanced Wolfenstein with some of the characteristics of Doom, SO brings some 3D arcade action for Mac users. The graphics are good, though a bit bland and boring in certain areas of the building, and the scrolling is fairly smooth. Actions are controlled with the keyboard, but the mouse is used to select different items such as weapons, etc. Running out of ammo in the midst of a fight with one gun means you have to reach for the mouse to select a new one; not too ideal, especially when Medical Kits and Body Armor are scarce. There is a Proximity Detector found early in the game that warns you of nearby guards which helps. It will not detect objects, though, and unlike Doom, secret doors are not hinted at with color variations on walls and the like, so happy searching. ***-Tasos***

PRAY IT'S ONLY A NIGHTMARE

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PLEASANT DREAMS.

ROBERTA WILLIAMS

PHANTASMAGORIA

SIERRA ON-LINE PRESENTS

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MUSIC BY NEAL GRANDSTAFF AND MARK SEIBERT ART DIRECTION BY ANDY HOYOS STARRING VICTORIA MORSELL AND DAVID HOMB

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SIERRA

MASSIVE EXPLOSION IN THE GAP; SCORES KILLED.

TAKE ON THE FUTURISTIC EVIL OF SECURITY WITH VIRGIN'S BENEATH A STEEL SKY.

You had gone with your mother on an outing when you were young. It was your first excursion outside of the City in your lifetime, to the place called the Gap. The day was beautiful, and you wanted it to last forever. Suddenly your world was shattered by the crash of your helicopter. Your mother died. You were six.

A group of Outsiders saw the crash, though. Since they had no access to the city, they took you into their fold. You became the adopted son of their leader, and you were known only as Robert until you became a man. When you were given your last name, it was read from a blue-and-white scrap of metal that read, simply, "Foster's." From that day forward you were known as Robert Foster.

Raised by a group of Outsiders in the area called the Gap, you must seek your true identity.

Important game elements are hot-spotted; puzzles abound.

You are now twenty-six. Your life has again been upended, this time by the group known only as Security; they control the City, encased in its steel dome. They came to where you lived in the Gap, took you away, and killed your "family." Another helicopter crash has freed you from their clutches, and you find yourself on the top floor of the building next to Security HQ, with only the circuitboard of your robot friend Joey in your possession. . .

Beneath a Steel Sky is a walk-around graphic adventure game. As is the nature of the genre, it is plot-intensive; the whole game scenario is based upon a future in which two corporations are battling for power over natural resources in the area. Your mission is to discover your true identity and defeat the evil forces of Security. The game uses a mouse-controlled interface with a drop-down inventory and hot-spots to help you navigate. You must converse with many characters in the game, hoping to uncover clues about yourself that will help you unlock the mystery of why Security is so interested in you.

Talk with the locals to gather information about puzzles in their area.

Beneath a Steel Sky

by Virgin Games

Game Summary

Uncover the secret of your identity in this graphic adventure game. Interact with corporate spies and an underground movement to overthrow the Union City government and its security force.

Overall Rating: 81%

Requirements:	386, 2MB RAM, VGA, Mouse, CD-ROM drive
Sound Support:	Sound Blaster, Adlib Roland
Controller:	Mouse
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Revolution Software
Distributed by:	Virgin Games
Retail Price:	$59.95
Hard Drive Space:	25 Bytes
No. of Players:	One player

THE SOFTWARE ROLODEX

Virgin Games

18061 Fitch Avenue
Irvine, CA 92714
(714) 833-8710
Fax: (714) 833-8717

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
80	81	85	86	35

BASS clearly illustrates the limitations of the aging graphic adventure genre. It features a streamlined, semi-linear plot; numerous, numerous applications of the move-mouse-around-to-find-hotspots design theory; and characters who (due to their tree-branch conversation skills) answer basic questions about power hierarchy in the city even after you've claimed to be a security officer. In addition, the world is supposedly grim and dystopian, but little of that atmosphere comes through when you travel with a (supposedly) comedic robotic sidekick. The voice talent on CD-ROM is very good; but this produces a Saturday morning cartoon effect due to their incongruity with the "grim" world. If you like graphic adventures, BASS is an above average example of that genre; but otherwise, stay away. **-Kevin**

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
88	82	88	86	20

If you're a fan of King's Quest-style adventure games, BASS is for you. The puzzles are both logical and compelling. The storyline is first rate, and the graphics and sound score high marks. While I'm not big on mouse interfaces, this one is well-built (but I still hate having to hunt for hot spots). The only thing this game fell short on was voice casting. Robert Foster sounds not only naive, but sort of bored as well; there are also times when he sounds overly cheerful about his situation. His robot pal, Joey, does nothing but whine and complain, and does neither convincingly. Their voices will start to irritate you after as little as fifteen minutes. You will be glad to note, though, that Virgin built in a text-only button, so you can (and probably will) shut off the voices. A good game, all told. **-Ted**

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
79	68	92	89	66

As much as I like a good graphic adventure, they can start to wear thin. I only like to spend a certain amount of time trying to get past the same area before I get frustrated. When the key to a solution is having to find that little bitty hot spot, that's it. To alleviate the frustration, you should be allowed to do what you want to. The main character, Robert Foster (named from a can of beer) will only shrug if he is not sure what you want him to do. Likewise, Bob likes•to•enunciate•every•syllable, and his robotic side-kick Joey insults him all the time. The graphics are artistically good but the environment does not exude the mood required to create a good setting. The storyline is interesting as are the characters and their speech. All else is pretty average. The best part is the comic book intro. **-Tasos**

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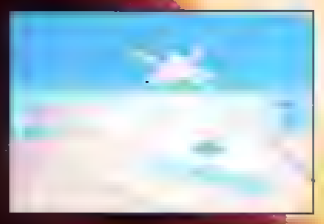

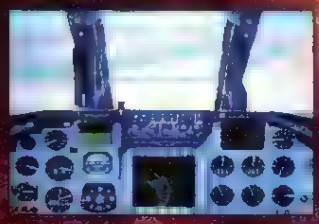

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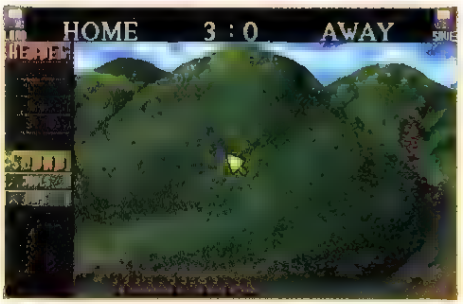
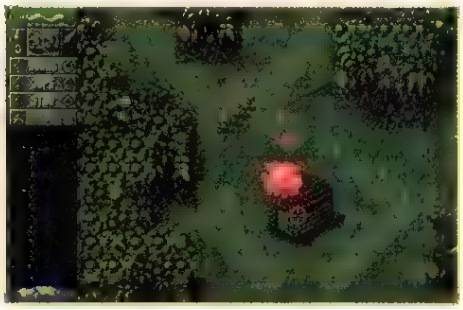
New from Virgin and Sensible Software is Cannon Fodder, a three-quarters perspective shooter. You will lead a team of commandos through the paces of guerrilla warfare. As your team completes missions successfully, members will rise in rank. As with any army, it's not necessarily the best that float to the top, just the survivors. Increases in rank are dutifully given to anybody who finishes a mission, while those conscripts that get killed (and have enough points) are given the special dispensation of hero status. The higher the rank, the better the gravestone.

There are twenty-four missions you must complete, and each mission has up to six scenarios. Your quest is to overthrow the man known as 'El Presidente.' You'll control your troops as ground squads (which can be split up), or in Choppas, Tanx, Jeeps, Skidooz or Biggunz. You'll face grunts, bazooka-wielding snipers, artillery, engineers and air forces. Some items have been hidden in the game to give you that special feeling that comes with invulnerability: missiles and bullet-proof vests. The terrain types vary according to mission, and each has its own unique features. Jungles generally contain quicksand, tundra has snowmen with hidden surprises, deserts have chasms and moorlands have nasty things that I'm not about to detail. Your final destination is the underground base of El Presidente.



You'll have people beating down your door in order to join your elite ranks.

Your troops increase in rank with each successfully completed mission.



Blowing stuff up has never been so much fun! Use your grenades wisely; you only have a few.

Cannon Fodder
by Virgin Games

Game Summary

Lead your troopers on a fast-paced tour of the countryside as you attempt to bring down the man known as 'El Presidente.' Use special vehicles and power-ups against the oncoming hordes.

Overall Rating: 88%

Requirements:	386 or better, VGA, 2MB RAM
Sound Support:	Sound Blaster, AdLib, Roland
Controller:	Mouse
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Sensible Software
Distributed by:	Virgin Games
Retail Price:	$44.95
Hard Drive Space:	3.5 Meg
No. of Players:	One player

THE SOFTWARE ROLODEX

Virgin Games

18061 Fitch Avenue
Irvine, CA 92714
(714) 833-8710
Fax: (714) 833-8717

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
86	91	79	81	84

Cannon Fodder is a game that approaches life with cheerful abandon and massive overkill: just the perfect thing to boot up after a hard day in the salt mines. There's not much cerebral about this one; visceral (if cartoony) is a better description. The game is just about as non-politically correct as you can get and still keep such a happy, bouncy joie de mort about the whole thing. It's simple to play, yet challenging to play well. Most importantly, it's a blast while you're trying. It's hardly perfect; explosion debris scatters randomly, easily removing your most experienced troops at no fault of your own. The game interface (not play interface) needs work as well; a load option is not available until the player doesn't really need one. Still, it's very amusing and fun to play, with plenty of play value. ***-Kevin***

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
95	99	88	89	95

CGR has been getting surprised lately. When the beta of X-COM showed up, none of us had heard of it. Likewise Cannon Fodder. While Cannon Fodder is not of the calibre of X-COM, this European game is addictively entertaining. Whereas I didn't particularly care for Sensible Software's last offering (Sensible Soccer), Cannon Fodder has completely turned my opinion of the company around. They've approached the subject matter exactly the way I'd like to see more games approach it: war is heinous and cruel, but this is *just a game*, folks, not the real thing. The humor found throughout the game is excellent, and the manual had me in stitches. The interface is very easy to learn and the graphics are super. One thing: watch the intro all the way through. You'll be glad you did. ***-Ted***

Interface	Playability	Graphics	Sound	Replay Value
93	97	85	80	94

I never thought war could be so funny. The interface is easy as the squad simply follows your mouse clicks around the screen. Then you just fire with the other button or click both of them together to fire a special weapon. That's it. Sometimes you will only wound a man severely, so you can watch him writhing on the ground and screaming in pain. Put him out of his misery if you're compassionate. The humorous introductory animated sequence sets the tone for the game. Little soldiers with big heads get stuck in some fatal situations. CF is like controlling toy soldiers through a variety of missions in different settings. The gruesomeness is about as innocent as what might occur in the imagination of a young boy playing with plastic G.I.'s. It's more arcade than it is strategy. ***-Tasos***

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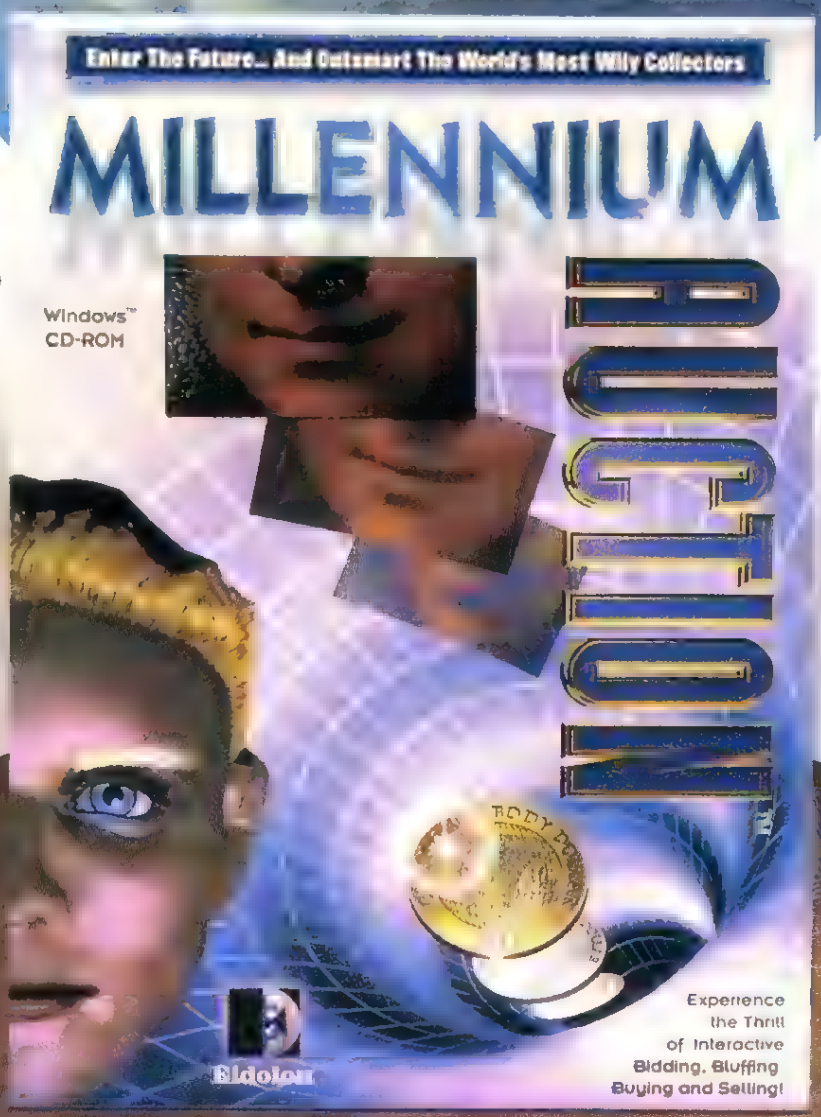
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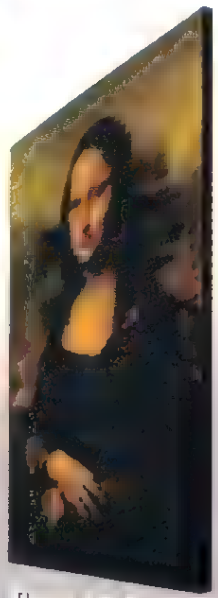

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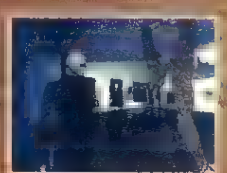

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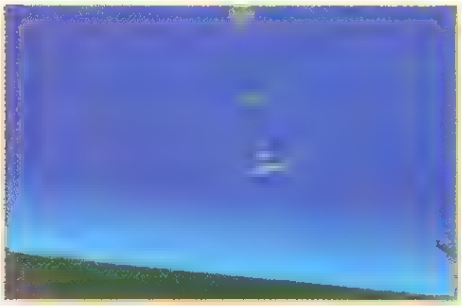
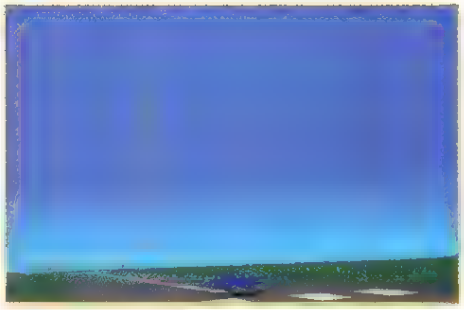
It's the Axis vs. the Yanks in WWII.

Relive two of the most important battles of World War II: Midway and Normandy.

The flak is starting. Rolling your Spitfire into a dive, you prepare for a strafing run against the German-controlled airfield below. One hundred feet off the ground, you pull the nose hard up, centering your gunsights on the line of Luftwaffe planes arrayed on the runway. You see Nazi pilots scrambling for some of the planes; other planes already have their engines revving to life. Screaming low across the turf, your 20mm cannons scream blazing death as two BF-109s explode in fiery agony



WWII includes several accurate flight models for the era; but accuracy won't save this one from the ground.

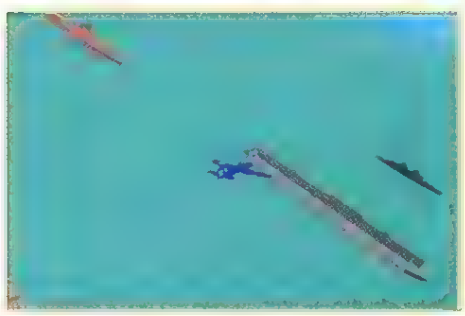


Better hurry up and get in the air; it looks like the carnage has already begun.

Shrapnel clangs off the underside of your fuselage as you apply full throttle to your engine in preparation for an Immelmann. The hangars are next on your agenda, and you toggle your weapons systems over to the bombs slung under your wings.

Domark is at it again, creating new worlds for you to fly in from their award-winning Flight Sim Toolkit. World War II lets you fly several different aircraft into battle, from the Lightning to the Spitfire to the Zero to the Junkers 88. Missions include taking out Luftwaffe-controlled airstrips, bombing runs on the landing craft at Normandy, air-to-air combat over the Midway Islands, and helping sink the Japanese Imperial Navy fleet. Please note that World War II is a stand-alone game, but can also be used with Flight Sim Toolkit.

Owners of Flight Sim Toolkit should be thrilled with what they'll get. Not only are there new aircraft with extremely accurate flight models, but Domark has gone to the trouble and expense of designing dozens of new tanks, ground targets and ships of all sizes. All of these can be pulled up and modeled within FST using the new FLY.EXE flight model a more accurate physical representation. Other notable additions to FST include teams (to model friendly aircraft on missions), in-air mission starts, and the new weapon class of torpedo.



Bomb, strafe and torpedo the Japanese (or American) fleet at Midway, changing the course of WWII.

World War II
by Domark

Game Summary

Fly missions of skill in two important battles of World War II: Midway and Normandy. Missions included will have you flying as the British, Americans, and Germans, using a new and more accurate FST flight model.

Overall Rating: 90%

Requirements:	386-33, 2MB RAM, DOS 5.0, VGA, Joystick
Sound Support:	Sound Blaster
Controller:	Joystick/keyboard
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Domark
Distributed by:	Spectrum Holobyte
Retail Price:	$24.99
Hard Drive Space:	14 Meg
No. of Players:	One player

The Software Rolodex

Domark Software, Inc.
1900 South Norfolk Street
Suite 202
San Mateo, California 94403
(415) 513-8929
(415) 571-0437

Interface • Playability • Graphics • Sound • Replay Value
85 82 91 70 65

This is really two products. One is a modest collection of air combat scenarios; the other is a powerful add-on to FST. If you don't have FST, this is a relatively cheap method of demoing what it can do for you (especially considering the $10 off coupon for FST inside). If you have no interest in FST, give this package a miss; the scenarios, though mildly amusing, are pretty bland and would pale miserably in comparison to true flight sims available today. But if you own and love FST, you're morally obligated to pick this package up, even if you're not a WWII fan. The updated FST.EXE includes many other features for FST that help to make it a more rounded product, allowing you to create scenarios that are closer to commercial products. It's really a software upgrade with delusions of being a standalone. **-Kevin**

Interface • Playability • Graphics • Sound • Replay Value
84 92 86 71 92

As a stand-alone product, I can't say I much liked World War II (although I do like being able to say that). It's a bit limited, and I would have liked to see other battles and some of the strategically important but fairly small skirmishes. As an FST add-on, though, I like this game a lot. The amount of detail that FST users will get is impressive, including realistic flight modeling of some of the best known and most used aircraft in the whole of World War II. The ground targets are gravy on top of the aircraft, and they not only act real, they look swell, too. One nice thing that Domark did is made the ground targets realistic instead of god-like. I can't tell you the number of times I've played a flight sim where the anti-aircraft batteries had either incredibly good fortune or the aim of Zeus. These don't and that's good. **-Ted**

Interface • Playability • Graphics • Sound • Replay Value
80 78 92 66 93

First and foremost, FST WWII is a nice add-on for FST. As a stand-alone game there is not much to it. There are only a few scenarios, and the plane you fly in is nearly predetermined (sometimes you get a choice between a couple). The computer pilots are good and there are plenty of ground targets to shoot at. The missions do give you an objective, but it's hard to figure out exactly where you need to go and what to do. There is no mission briefing, and the map is nothing more then a lot of different colored blips. Mainly it functions best as a testing ground to fly the planes you designed in the FST. The computer pilots will put your aircraft to the test in a dogfight as you dodge ground fire. If you have thought about buying the FST, then the low $24.99 price tag might make this a good way to try it out. **-Tasos**

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game called Red Baron.® His cousins live 2,000 miles away, but that didn't stop them from sending James down in flames After that, his mom got on and played speed chess

with TRISH, her on-line sister. And then at midnight his dad got on as ZORK2,

dungeon master of The Shadow of Yserbius™ But don't bring it up. James is kind of sensitive about it And talk about cool. The interface is full color and easy to understand

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THE GHOST IN THE MACHINE

What constitutes an "ultimate" gaming PC? First, let's clear up my misgiving about ultimate anything. Because the only constant is change, the only system you will ever be able to buy is a penultimate one. Second, if you're going to use an operating system other than DOS as your base for running DOS games, look elsewhere.

Let's start with price, based on direct mail PC prices. A system that will meet your needs for at least the next five years should be priced between $2000 and $2500. For this amount, currently you can get (minimum) a VESA local bus 486-66 with 8MB RAM, 340MB+ hard drive, sound card and 2X CD-ROM drive, 15" flat screen .28dpi NI monitor and lots of bundled software. Bear in mind that, while you can get this system for less, a lot of the money you'll be paying out goes toward customer service/technical support. Buy from a respected name, such as Gateway or even IBM. You may never use it, but it's better to have it.

If money is no object, buy according to tested extremes. Currently, my penultimate gaming PC would be a Pentium 100 multi-architecture machine loaded with 32MB RAM (more would be silly), SCSI 10GB hard drive, 4X CD-ROM drive, Matrox MGA Ultima Plus graphics accelerator with 4MB VRAM and 21" flat screen .28dpi NI monitor. I'm not certain what I would use for my sound setup, but it would definitely incorporate SRS technology and the Roland SCD-15 daughterboard. Joysticks I would keep on hand include (but are by no means limited to) the CH Products Mach 1, Thrustmaster F1 driving wheel/pedal combo, STD PC Optix and Quickshot Super Warrior. Piping all of the sound through a Bang & Olufson stereo system would be a beautiful, if somewhat extravagant, touch. I'd load it all into a tower case with dual cooling fans and a chip fan.

You'll note that caveat: buy according to tested extremes. Back just a few months ago, Intel claimed that they were having some cooling problems with the Pentium 66; Intel said that the clock speed was just too much. Instead, they said, you could have a Pentium at the 60Mhz speed now, or *wait for as long as it took* to iron out the problem with the new chips. Many people got suckered into thinking that the 66MHz chips weren't going to be out for at least a year, and maybe two, and they went ahead and bought the Pentium 60s. BOING! We now have a plethora of Pentium 90s, and Intel is saying they're having some problems with the 100MHz machines. Does this sound like a conspiracy to you, too?

BUY A GAMING ACCESSORY, GET A SOOTHING BACKRUB.

DOES THE WORLD REALLY NEED VIRTUAL REALITY GAME WEAR? AURA THINKS SO, AND SO MIGHT YOU.

The Interactor virtual reality vest is a product I first saw at Summer CES '94. The technical details read as follows: "4 ohm impedance, 35-55Hz resonant frequency, 30 watts peak power, with variable intensity and frequency controls." Boiled down, it's a subwoofer speaker encased in an ABS plastic backpack. The whole point of the design is to bring you closer to the game action by causing your entire body to feel all the low notes and noises such as punches, kicks, explosions, etc. The case is well-designed and should cause no discomfort at all to wear (unless you do something idiotic such as wear it to bed, in the shower, etc., or you wrap the cord around your neck and draw it tight).

Please do not get the impression that you'll get any sort of high fidelity sound out of the Interactor; that is simply not its job. When you wear this, you should be sitting in a chair with a padded backrest so that the speaker is almost entirely muted. This way, all of the speaker's punch is redirected into your body, and you get the added benefit of excellent lumbar support, too.

The Interactor comes with almost everything you need to hook it up to your system's sound card. I say "almost" because, unless you have a set of speakers with a subwoofer jack built in (like the ACS300s from Altec Lansing), you'll need a 1/8" stereo splitter adapter. This is the only thing not included, though; the Interactor comes with jacks for hooking it up to just about any other sound source you can think of (stereo, console video game, etc.). Standard components include a power amplifier that lets you set the Interactor to your own comfort level, as well as adjust the amount of noise filtering.

Although the Interactor is supposed to be worn over your shoulders and belted around your waist, I found that it was best left harnessed to my chair. This way, I didn't have to pick it up and put it on every time I wanted to use it. As long as you don't roll from one end of the room to the other, the vest will be safe from most forms of abuse. The cord connecting the vest to its amplifier is nice and long (about ten feet), but it doesn't look like it'll take a whole lot of wear and tear. Remember to remove it before you go to bed or the bathroom. The case, on the other hand, looks like it could stand up to the Samsonite 'gorilla test;' the power amp has a nice solid feel to it, and could make a handy emergency projectile.

Construction	Design	Usefulness
91	84	75

I'm not certain how devoted PC gamers will be to this concept, but the Interactor is a hit in the video gaming world. It does enhance game play, helping to bring you more in contact with the game and further from reality. One thing that I found that wasn't mentioned as a safety precaution in the manual: don't use this product at its highest setting any closer than thirty minutes before you operate a car. The reason is that your eyes get used to focusing on your computer screen while your body is being jolted with vibration; thus, when you take off the vest, your vision will remain temporarily blurred (although I don't think any damage is being done). Is it worth the price? Maybe. It depends on your perception: the Interactor is somewhat loud, but (as I stated two months ago) it gives a great lower back massage. ***-Ted***

THE HARDWARE ROLODEX

Aura Systems

2335 Alaska Avenue
El Segundo, CA 90245
(800) 909-2872
Fax: (310) 643-8846

Interactor
by Aura Systems

Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Aura Systems
Distributed by:	Aura Systems
Retail Price:	$99

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FREE UP SOME DESKTOP SPACE FOR A MINIMUM OF CASH WITH THE J-310.

J-310 by Jazz Speakers	
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Jazz Speakers
Distributed by:	Jazz Speakers
Retail Price:	$84.95

Jazz Speakers, nee Jazz Hipster, recently released the J-310, a mid-priced pair of speakers that deliver impressive range and response. They are the lowest-priced speaker in the Jazz line, but their quality is far from cheap. Rated at 5.5 watts per channel, they have 3" cones and a frequency response that exceeds the extremes of human hearing at both ends of the sonic spectrum. Their total harmonic distortion is less than one-tenth of one percent. The controls (volume, bass, and treble) are conveniently located on the face of the amplifier unit; the speakers come with small stands to lower the bass distortion that you ordinarily would get from conduction through your desktop.

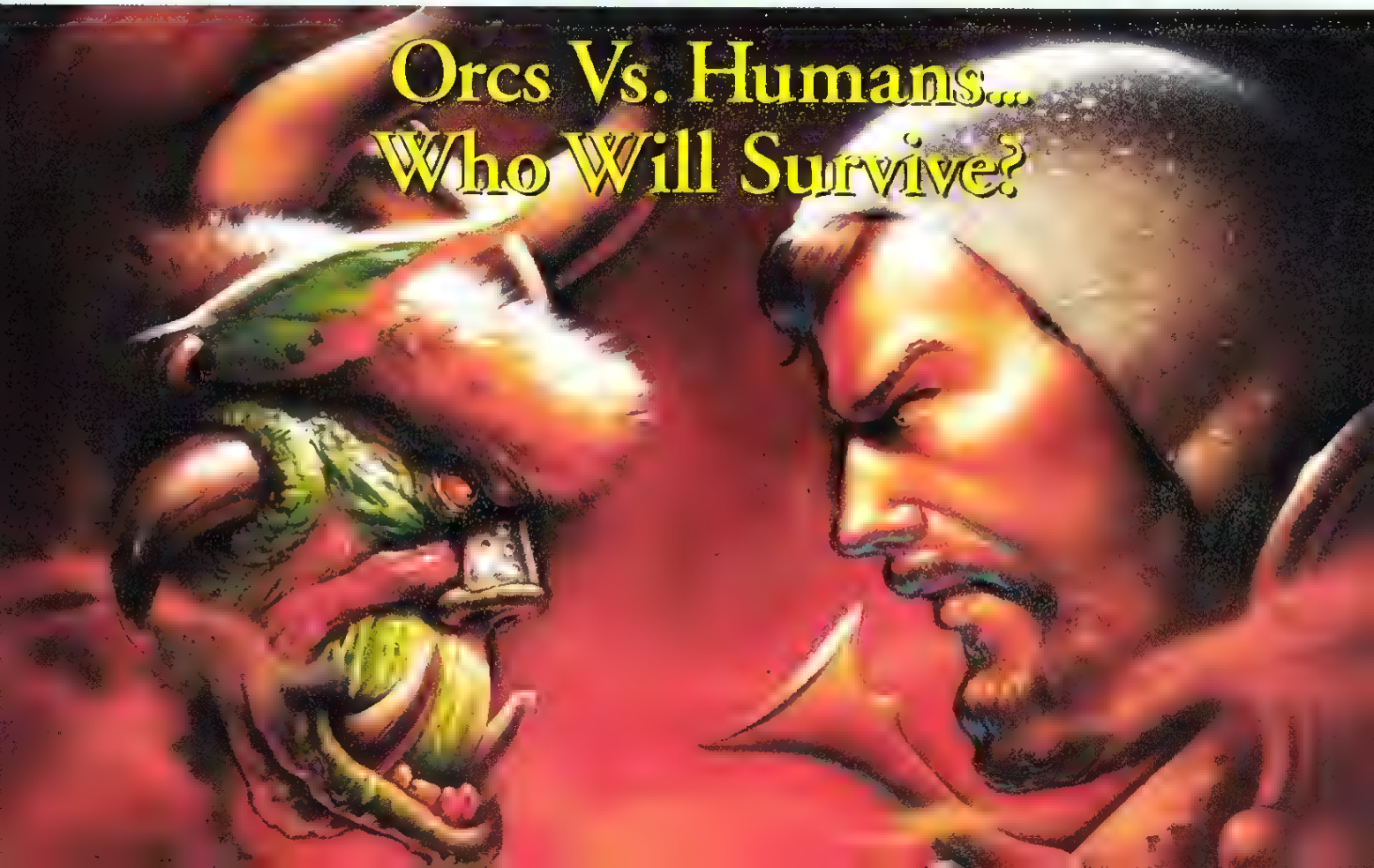
Sound Quality	Construction	Design
89	94	92

After reviewing four pairs of Jazz speakers in five months, some people must think I'm on the take. Not so! I simply cover what gets sent to me, if I think it's worth a review. And so, for the fourth time I'm here to say that Jazz is putting out some of the best PC speakers I've seen, and the J-310 is no exception. Not only does it feel as though you wouldn't damage them if you dropped them from 5000 feet, their sound quality is top-notch. The biggest bonus of all, however, is their price. Although the J-310s retail for $84.95, you can expect to see them at a street price of around sixty bucks. This puts them in the cash equivalency realm of one game. And though I'm not easily swayed by added googaws, the stands are not only functional (your music will sound better without bass conduction), they're also attractive. ***-Ted***

THE HARDWARE ROLODEX

Jazz Speakers

1217 John Reed Court
City of Industry, CA 91745
(818) 336-2689
Fax: (818) 336-2489



Joysticks. Heaping gobs of joysticks.

Lead Pursuit's Joyswitch allows you to have a joystick for any mood.

Joyswitch by Lead Pursuit	
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Lead Pursuit
Distributed by:	Lead Pursuit
Retail Price:	$59.95

The Joyswitch is one of those products for people who have both a hard-core love of flight sims combined with a passion for driving games, with the occasional two-player game thrown in for good measure. What it amounts to is a data switch that allows you to select from four different joysticks and two foot controllers. This means that you can have all sorts of combinations of controllers attached to your PC without having to manually pull plugs every time you want to use a different one. The only requirement is a four-way joystick port on your system; this is the standard installed on sound cards. One of the ports on the Joyswitch is specifically designed to work with the ThrustMaster Weapons Control System Mark II. The case is durable, having been constructed from sheet steel.

Ease of Use	Usefulness	Durability
95	80	98

One of these days my curiosity is going to get the better of me. While I was setting up this page, before I had even tested the Joyswitch, I decided to open the case and see what made this switch tick. Imagine my amazement when I discovered that the innards looked almost exactly like something I had put together in the 9th grade. This is not to say that the Joyswitch is a sloppy piece of workmanship; I was quite the craftsman in my youth. Instead, I admired Lead Pursuit's simple yet elegant solution to a problem I often encounter: having to swap joysticks when my machine is parked in a tight corner. It also worked perfectly with every combination I threw at it: the ThrustMaster F1 driving wheel/pedal combo, using a joystick as a foot switch for accelerating and braking in IndyCar, etc. Nice one. *-Ted*

The Hardware Rolodex

Lead Pursuit
27068 La Paz Road
No 466
Laguna Niguel CA 92656
(714) 362-8698
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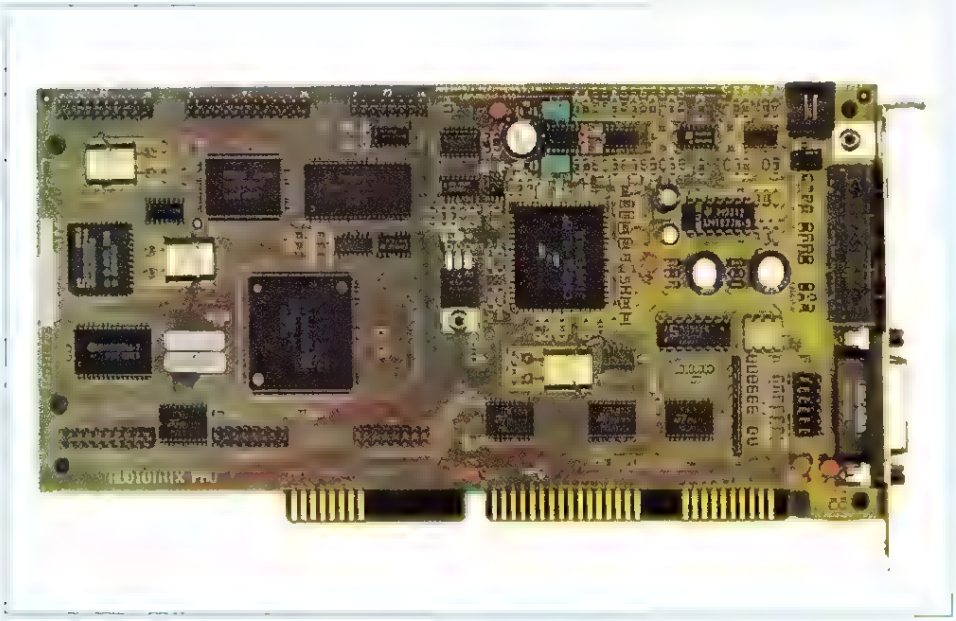
†1993 Video Games Magazine

TENTATIVELY, HE ASSIGNED THREE IRQS...

A COMPANY WITH THE UNUSUAL NAME OF MEDIATRIX INTRODUCES THE AUDIOTRIX PRO SOUND CARD.



Surprise, surprise, surprise! The Audiotrix Pro came through with flying colors, excelling in all areas and surpassing my wildest expectations. Truly a sound card for the dedicated gamer.

When the Audiotrix Pro landed in my lap, I wasn't sure I wanted to go through the pain of installing yet another sound card this month. Sound cards are notoriously tricky installations, and I seriously considered shelving it for another month. Fortunately, the PR staff at Mediatrix kept after me; if not for them, I might have missed out on telling everyone about this card.

First let's go through the hardware specifics. The Audiotrix Pro is MPC-2 compatible, with full backwards compatibility with the accepted Sound Blaster and AdLib standards. Its design centers around the new OPL4 chip from Yamaha, capable of 16-bit FM synthesis and 24-voice wavetable synthesis. A built-in amplifier is capable of 4 watts-per-channel, and there's the ubiquitous joystick/MIDI port.

Bundled with the Audiotrix Pro are several utilities and entertainment packages. JukeDOS and JukeWin are MIDI and WAV players, while there is a separate MOD player called (not surprisingly) MOD Player. A rackmount stereo-type utility called Sound Impression allows you to listen to audio CDs as well as record from any source you can reasonably manage to plug into the Line-In jack. A waveform editor lets you clip, edit and save your own WAV files. If you want to sit down and create a little music, there's SuperJAM Jr., Music Magic and (for the less inhibited in the crowd) Soft Karaoke.

While the Audiotrix Pro doesn't have onboard CD-ROM connectors, there is an expansion module available for this need. Other expansion upgrades include a RAM daughterboard to expand the range of instrument sounds available, an effects processor for adding those special touches to the music and sounds you create and/or listen to, and a karaoke voice processor. This last is best left unexplained, I think.

The Audiotrix Pro has very low system requirements: XT/AT, DOS 3.1, 640K RAM. Due to DOS 5's memory handling capabilities, though, I'd recommend having that, or better, instead. Oddly, there is an EGA/VGA video requirement.

THE HARDWARE ROLODEX

Mediatrix Peripherals
4229 Garlock Street
Sherbrooke, Quebec, Canada J1L 2C8
(800) 820-8749
(819) 829-8749
Fax: (819) 829-5100

Audiotrix Pro
by Mediatrix Peripherals

Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Mediatrix Peripherals
Distributed by:	Mediatrix Peripherals
Retail Price:	$295.00

Ease of Use	Installation	Usefulness
95	91	95

Gushing about sound boards is not something I generally do, but the Audiotrix is rather exceptional. Not only do you get quality sound, you also get an installation program and manual that don't try to fool you into thinking you already know everything about the card from looking at the box. This card is so well-documented that Forrest Gump could install it. Because the PR guy at Mediatrix kept bugging me about how great this card was (being the hardware editor, I get a lot of this), I put it through the paces: every obscure game with an out-of-the-ordinary sound setup was thrown at it. It turns out that the PR guy wasn't kidding. This card performed flawlessly. My only point of contention is in how the card seats (see the installation tips below). This card is nearly perfect. ***-Ted***

INSTALLATION TIPS

Difficulty Rating(1-10): 3

Three IRQs? Well... yes, although one of them is useless unless you have the CD-ROM interface expansion board. I ran into only one problem with the board, although it's not something you should have to worry about unless your house (apartment, condo, bungalow, hovel, cave, whatever) is excessively dirty. It seems that the board is a little short on the business end of it, and so the slot cover doesn't slide neatly into place. I've installed many sound cards on the system I installed this one on, and have never run into this trouble, so I can only assume that it's a manufacturing problem. My recommendation is to not screw the board in place and clean your machine regularly, which you should be doing anyway.

Installation of this board was a breeze, keeping in mind that I already know which IRQs, DMAs channels and port addresses are clear on my machine. If you don't know, don't you think it's time you found out? The software installation took me directly to an information file that told me what I would need in advance, as well as giving me a complete listing, by name and location, of every file it would put on my system. It also informed me of the changes it would make to my AUTOEXEC.BAT, CONFIG.SYS and Windows startup files. Because of these considerations, Mediatrix has become my very favorite hardware company. It's this kind of stuff that hardware installers, both novice and experienced, appreciate being told up front. This way, there are no surprises if you ever need to change the way your system handles itself, and no need to tear your hair out if you run into a problem.

WARNING
Contains Mature Subject Matter

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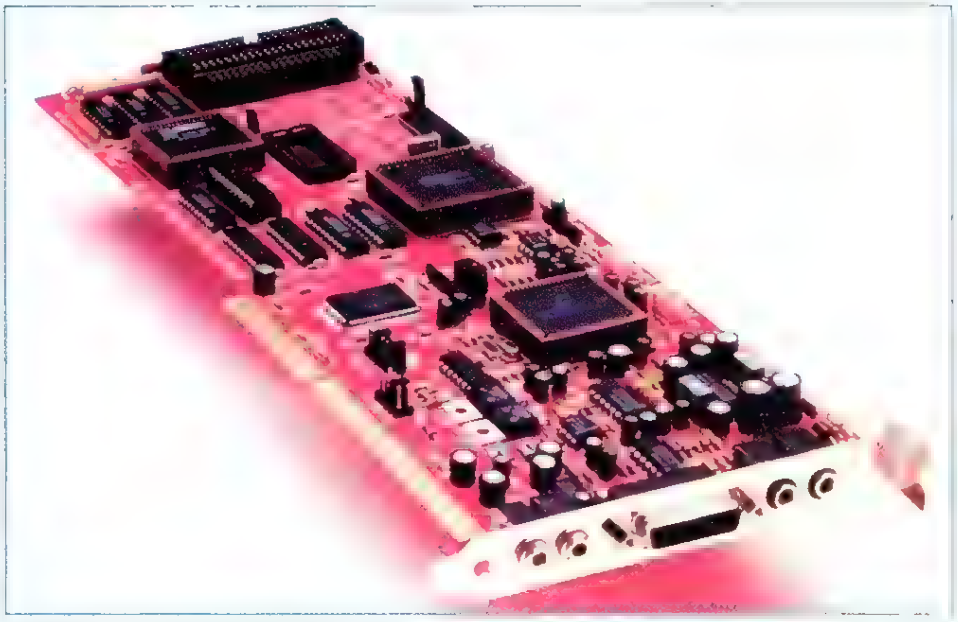
If you knew GUS like I know GUS...

Advanced Gravis comes out swinging with the UltraSound Max.



The UltraSound Max from Advanced Gravis is not an ideal solution, but it's hard to beat for games that were designed to be compatible with its programming.

The UltraSound Max is Advanced Gravis' latest foray into the sound card market; it is an updated and strengthened version of its original offering, the UltraSound. It features 16-bit 48KHz stereo playback and recording, 32-voice wavetable synthesis, a speed compensating gameport and a 4 watts-per-channel amplifier. There are three separate CD-ROM drive interfaces, one each for Mitsumi, Sony and Panasonic single- or double-speed drives. One rather interesting feature of the UltraSound Max is its dedicated digital sound processor, which handles all calls to the soundcard; this relieves your CPU from having to do the manual drudge work involved in sound processing.

The Hardware Rolodex

Advanced Gravis

#101 - 3750 North Fraser Way
Burnaby, BC, Canada V5J 5E9
(604) 431-5020
Fax: (604) 431-5155

UltraSound Max
by Advanced Gravis

Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Advanced Gravis
Distributed by:	Advanced Gravis
Retail Price:	$299.95

The UltraSound Max comes bundled with a plethora of software. For those inclined toward sound engineering, there's Patch Maker Lite for creating new instrument sounds and Patch Manager, which allows you to load and audition MIDI patches easily. MIDISoft Recording session (a composition and sequencing program) and Power Chords (a guitars-n-drums sequencer) are included for those whose forte lies in creating music. People (such as the CGR staff) who simply want to dicker around with WAV and MOD files will enjoy WaveLite and UltraSound Studio. Want a quick game? Epic Pinball includes several tables, and Epic Software has gone to the trouble of designing the soundtrack to work precisely with the GUS Max. WinSoft Sound Station is a multi-component control system and mixer, while Playfile and PlayMIDI are DOS-based applications to play (what else?) digital audio and General MIDI files. Rounding out the group is 3D Demo, showcasing the UltraSound's 3D Holographic Sound system. Also included with the GUS Max is the shareware version of Doom.

There are a few requirements to install this card in your system. First off, you'll need a 386 or better. DOS 5.0 or higher is definitely recommended, as the drivers for the GUS Max are best loaded high. If you decide to install all the support software, make sure to have at least 20MB of free hard drive space.

Ease of Use	Installation	Usefulness
75	60	75

The GUS Max is a quirky card that never quite gets over the big job it's supposed to do. Although the instrument bank it uses for General MIDI has all the instruments listed in proper order, the games I tested it out on sounded almost, but not quite, like they were supposed to. Despite the "speed compensating game port," there was a definite drift to the joystick which no amount of calibrating and recalibrating could fix. The amount of memory (conventional or otherwise) that you have to reserve to run games is large, so if you load a lot of TSRs, expect to have to boot clean. Gravis acknowledges that the GUS Max is not compatible with all game titles; this is nice, as well as honest, but you should be able to get that knowledge up front, before you shell out cash for the card. **-Ted**

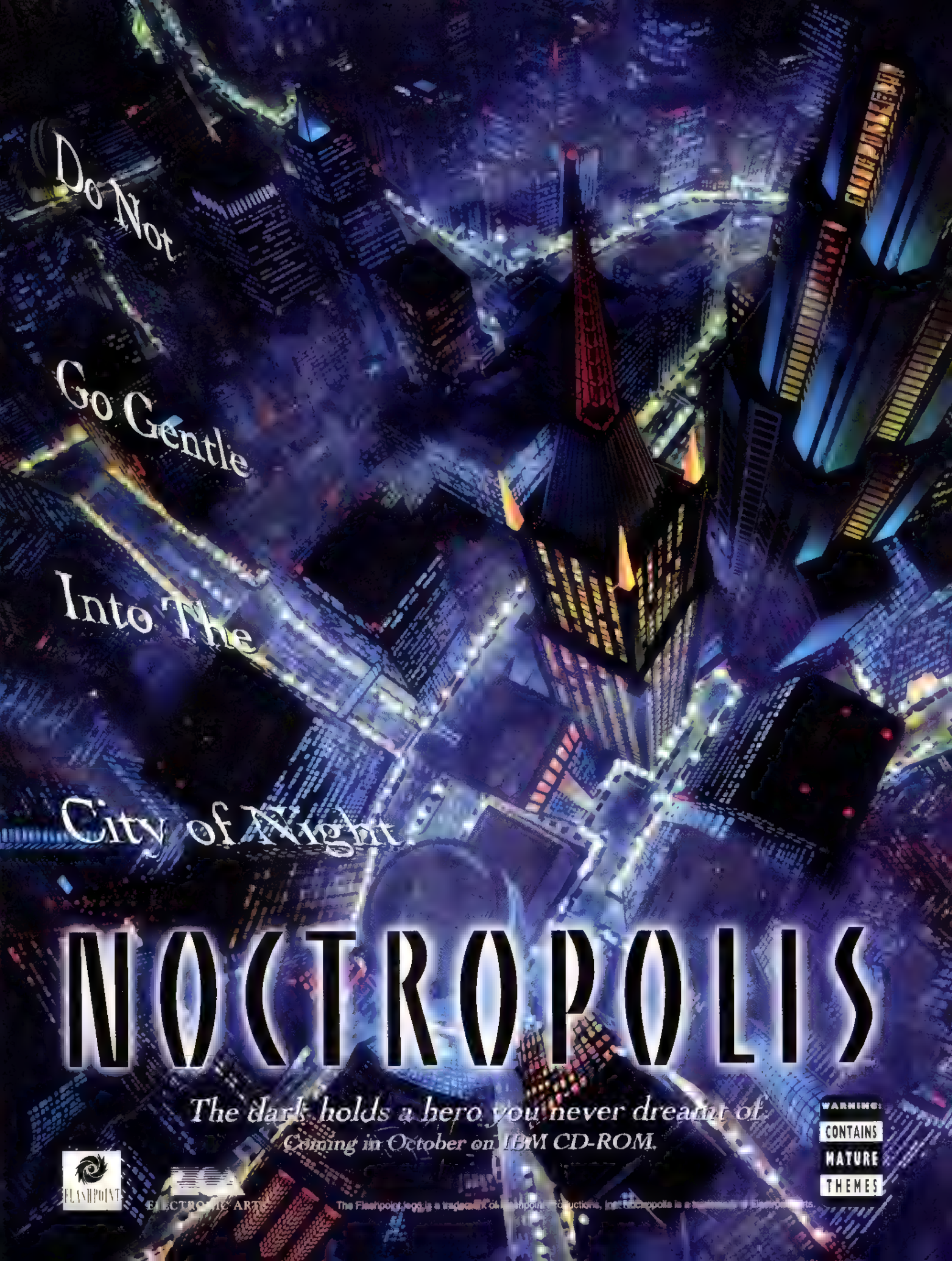
Installation Tips

Difficulty Rating(1-10): 8

Although I generally take a look at the README file included with just about every PC product these days, I don't usually print them out. Trust me: print out the README file for the GUS Max. The installation documentation wouldn't give you enough paper to stuff a dead woodchuck, but the README file holds the key to success. The floppy installation is quite extended, as Gravis apparently feels that files should be decompressed on the fly, rather than copying the files to your hard drive and decompressing them there. The basic installation software (what you need to work with the board, not the fluffy bundled stuff) does have one nice feature: it can work with DOS 6's multi-configurations.

Getting down to specifics, be aware beforehand that the GUS Max automatically preempts IRQ 11. While this may be okay for some folks, it won't come up roses for those who have a Mitsumi CD-ROM drive (or anything else that uses IRQ 11). Rather than run screaming back to your hardware retailer, try this first: locate the item in your system that addresses IRQ 11 and disable it when you boot, then run the Gravis installation. Once the installation is finished, change the Gravis IRQ through the software. While this may seem a hassle, it's not unheard of in the world of hardware. Imagine installing the GUS Max first and then having to add a Mitsumi drive to your system.

Gravis also goofed a bit in the design for the GUS Max's slot cover. The jacks aren't labeled, so you'll need to figure out what plugs in where. Don't bother searching the documentation; it's simply not specified anywhere.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NOCTROPOLIS
The dark holds a hero you never dreamt of.
Coming in October on IBM CD-ROM.
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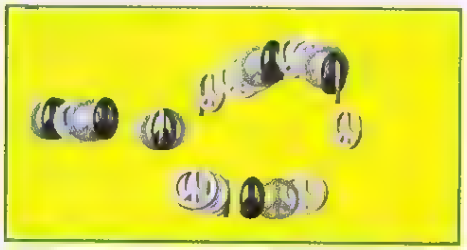
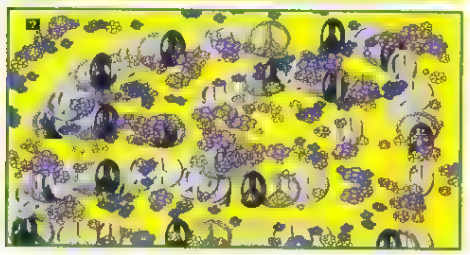
ELECTRONIC ARTS

IF YOU REMEMBER WAVY GRAVY, THIS CD IS FOR YOU!

USE YOUR CD-ROM AND FLASHBACK TO THAT WEEKEND IN AUGUST 1969 WHEN LOVE & MUSIC PREVAILED.

In one of the more turbulent years of our history rose a human island of music, free love and peace. It is still *the* concert of concerts: Woodstock. In one weekend hundreds of thousands of young people gathered in upstate New York to catch a few tunes, some love, a buzz and a little goodwill amidst the rising social unrest concerning the Vietnam War. Woodstock continues to live as legend perpetuated by the music made and shared there, as well as the movie which documented a real-life spontaneous phenomenon. Now the mother of all concerts comes alive in your computer thanks to CD-ROM technology. The title of this product is nearly as long as the concert itself: Woodstock: 3 Days of Peace & Music 25th Anniversary CD-ROM. The CD





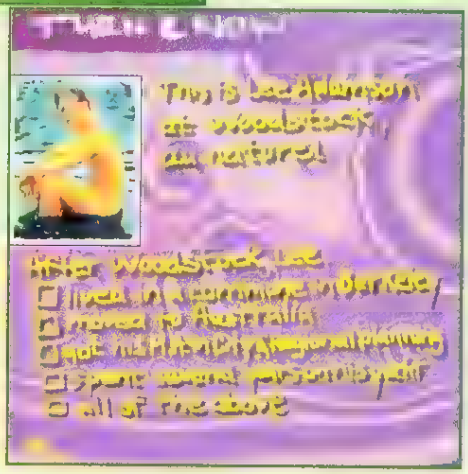
In the paint program you can create art while listening to the music. It's a far-out, groovy thing!

release coincided with the release of the new director's cut of the movie, the outdoor concert held in Saugerites, New York and the special edition boxed set of all the music from the original concert.

This offering does pretty much everything I expected it to. It is a multi-media retrospective of Woodstock with an entertaining game thrown in to balance the documentary feel of the CD. The CD only offers a selection of 8 tunes from the concert, which gives a feeling of being shortchanged. The songs, all studio versions, are from Crosby, Stills and Nash, Janis Joplin, Sly and the Family Stone, Jefferson Airplane, Ten Years After, Richie Havens, Country Joe McDonald and The Who. I had expected Jimi Hendrix's blazing "Star Spangled Banner" rendition, some Grateful Dead, Joe Cocker's "With A Little Help From My Friends" and Carlos Santana, but they are not to be found. You do get an area where you can go in and browse through a multi-media biography of all the performers appearing at Woodstock. The area is called Performers and you can click on an area which tells you about them; another area calls up their album covers with a song title list; another provides a few photographs of the performers while at Woodstock. You also get a short musical clip from one of the performers' songs.

In keeping with its documentary foundation, you can go into an area which is called Backstage. Here you'll find a montage of people pictures which you can click on. The video clips are from the movie and presents all the different comments and reactions the people had about Woodstock.

The same format is used under the People section. Instead of performers and concert organizers, this area presents interviews done with concert attendees like Lee Adamson (see above). His clip



Answer the questions correctly and you'll find spiritual enlightenment. Really! (ans. all of the above.)

explains why going naked is the healthy thing to do (I 'm naked right now). Also, he is the young man in the movie seen talking on the telephone, trying to convince his girlfriend to come down and explaining why she wouldn't need a ticket to get in.

The other major area is the featured songs. The selections are complete and come with a pictorial montage. If you want, you can click on the lyrics and sing along. Or, you can go directly into the Groovy Paint program. While the tune is playing you have all kinds of options and tools at your disposal to draw far-out pictures on your computer screen. I found the paint programs quite a lot of fun, actually. Each song has its own set of objects and symbols and you can do all kinds of psychedelic things with the screen. It really is groovy.

Woodstock the CD is an indulgence, but it will complement your copy of Woodstock the movie and the boxed music set. And, well I did enjoy my trip back to that golden weekend via CD-ROM, but I swear, I didn't inhale! ***-Steven Greenlee***

There are photo albums in Woodstock. Some of the pictures were taken from the movie while others have not been seen before. Also, the photos are used as montages for the 8 featured songs.

Woodstock
by Time Warner Interactive

Requirements:	386DX/25, System 7, Windows, VGA, sound card, 8 MB RAM
Available for:	MPC and Macintosh
Designed by:	Opcode Interactive
Distributed by:	Time Warner Interactive
Retail Price:	$59.99
Hard Drive Space:	5 Meg
No. of Players:	One player

LEARN GEOGRAPHY THE TETRIS WAY.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC'S ZIPZAPMAP IS THE GAME WAY TO LEARN THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE UNITED STATES.

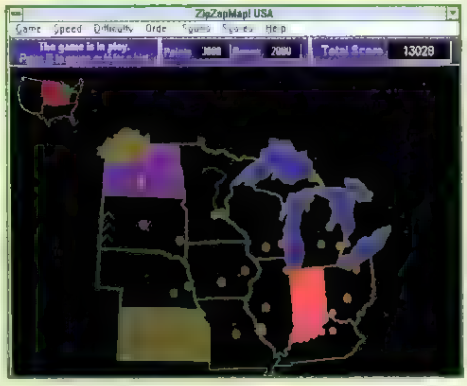
What is the capital of New Mexico? Where is Lake Huron? Which range of mountains are called the "Smokies?" National Geographic has the answers and puts them into a Tetris-like game designed to increase your knowledge of geography.

This Windows game puts about 2 MB of files on the hard drive, but here is the kicker, it installs from one 3.5" floppy disk! Otherwise this is a simple game which can be played all the way through in maybe an hour; a little longer for younger people.

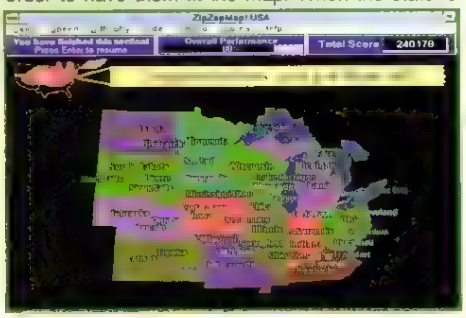
Here's how you play; first you have to pick which geographic region of the US to play in. Then the geographic tiles will begin to fall from the top of the screen. The states are first. The actual state shapes are used, but you have to rotate them in order to have them fit the map. When the state is over its correct geographic location, just hit the space bar and it locks into place. After all the states have been placed, you'll need to correctly place state capitals, notable cities, rivers, lakes and mountains. You earn points for each correct placement you make, but the score is decreased each time you make an incorrect placement or let the tile fall on through.

The interface is somewhat sluggish and unresponsive, but passable. ZipZapMap really isn't something older teens or adults would find that fun, but younger kids should like it, and they may actually benefit from playing it. ***-Steven Greenlee***

ZipZapMap by National Geographic	
Requirements:	PS/1 or 2, 2 MB RAM, 286sx 3.5" disk drive, Windows 3.1
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Promark Software
Distributed by:	National Geographic Software
Retail Price:	$39.95
Hard Drive Space:	2 Meg
No. of Players:	One player



As a geographic piece falls, you have to rotate it and place it over its outline on the map.



When you have completed an area, proceed to another of the regions and play again.

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BONUS BATTLES! MEGA MAN® AND MEGA MAN 3®!

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IT WAS A TIME OF HEROES, DEATH AND VICTORY!

THIS IS THE YEAR OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MILITARY STRATEGY THAT CHANGED THE COURSE OF WWII.

The French company MilleMédias is just now landing in America and is offering their newest CD-ROM called D-Day-Normandy 44. This huge publishing concern in Europe was a tad late in shipping this title, hoping it would coincide with all the summer commemorations, especially President Clinton's visit to Normandy. Regardless, this is a fine entry into the infotainment ranks.

D-Day: Normandy 44 is actually a two disk series. This first CD is called 100 Days of Destiny and is divided into five parts: Strategy, Preparation for D-Day, Landing, Normandy Battle and the Liberation of Paris. Each area contains extensive photographs

The French spy Gallois had to convince Patton and the Allies to march on Paris ahead of plan.

culled from all sorts of archives including private collections. Also, there is some video footage and spoken narration. The narration is professionally done and very informative. Another nice feature of D-Day is at any time you can click on a newspaper icon in the upper right hand corner and get written text.

Each major area is then broken down into sub-areas. These sub-areas can be accessed by clicking on the corresponding photograph. Some of these sub-areas will have extensive photographs, narration and video; others will be little more than cursory, with only a few photographs and a quick narration of why it is included in the major area. Some sub-areas include very good maps

D-Day-Normandy 44 by MilleMédias	
Requirements:	MPC 386, 4MB RAM, VGA System 7.0, Windows 3.1
Available for:	MPC and Macintosh
Designed by:	Montparnasse Multimedia
Distributed by:	MilleMédias
Retail Price:	$59.95
Hard Drive Space:	.5 Meg
No. of Players:	One player

The Strategy

If you so choose, you can begin by first going to the first chronological chapter of the D-Day story. Under the the Strategy area you will be able to follow how and why there was a Normandy invasion. It shows how the Allies began adopting plans for the reconquest of Europe, how Normandy was chosen and the entrance of Generals Eisenhower and Montgomery on the scene.

Preparation for Landing

This area deals with actual plans for the Landing with an in-depth look at the disinformation efforts to throw Germany off the Normandy Invasion scent. This disinformation plan was called Fortitude, and D-Day presents in-depth information on how the Allies fed the Axis powers bad information on troop training, planned bombings and troop movements before June 6th.

The Landing

Here you'll be able to see what the activity was like in the few days before June 6th. You'll also be able to follow the battleship routes, check out all five invasion beaches, the parachute attack and how the resistance assisted.

The Normandy Battle

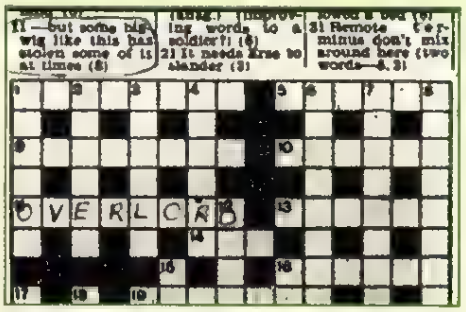
This goes right into the heart of the battles for Fortress Europe. There are rare photographs of the walk on Cherbourg, the fierce fighting around Caen and St-Lô, the breakthrough of Avranches, the German counter-offensive in Mortain and the defeat of the 7th German army at Falaise.

The Liberation of Paris

This area chronicles the efforts to liberate Paris first through a planned resistance uprising, then the entry of the 2nd Armored Division, as well as the surrender of Von Choltitz and General de Gaulle's triumphant arrival.

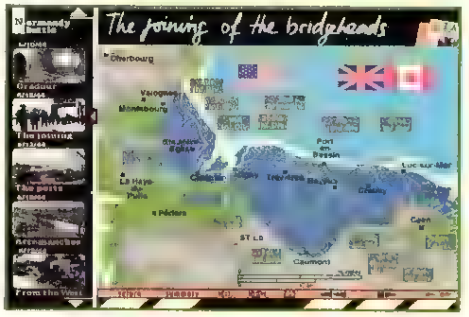
In addition to all the photographs, narrative and video you can access two additional informational areas from the main screen. One area is an alphabetical listing of major Allied and German figures. Click on any name and a biography will pop-up. The other area is a detailed listing of the major armaments and equipment used by both sides

All pictures come with a very nice feature that explains what the picture contains.


but some big wig like this has stolen some of it at times (8)
ing words, to a soldier? (4)
It needs Eve to slander (3)
Remote ... minus don't mix around here (two words—4, 3)
OVERLORD

One of the biggest spy scares of the war, this crossword puzzle a huge coincidence.

This photograph captures the Belgium Armored unit being welcomed by their countrymen in Brussels.



This is just one of the animated maps which succinctly illustrate the progress of the invasion.

Again, click on what interests you and get solid information on the subject.

This program has several redeeming features Many of the maps used are animated, and you can zoom in on them to see even more detail. The photographs are sharp and very interesting. Many of them have not been seen before. The video clips are better than I expected, while the narration was solid and well done. D-Day: Normandy 44—100 Days of Destiny is excellent.

-Steven Greenlee

HOW MANY TONS OF GOAT MEAT DOES BRAZIL PRODUCE?

FIND OUT IN SOFTWARE TOOLWORKS' WORLD ATLAS NOW AVAILABLE ON CD-ROM.

Software Toolworks is now making available their World Atlas in an all new update (Version 5) and it is a handy little reference program. It's simple to install, but it does need Video For Windows 1.1 Runtime, which it will install if you don't have it already. After the install there's nothing left to do but boot it up and begin exploring the world.

World Atlas is an atlas in all the ways the printed version is. The difference here is that with CD-ROM technology, this atlas comes with full motion video clips, pictures and audio. You can access the Phrases section and learn to say "goodnight" in more than two dozen languages. Either by going to a specific country or by accessing it through a library window, you can view over 150 video clips of major world cities, peruse over 1,000 hi-res color photographs, and hear each country's national anthem.

World Atlas by Software Toolworks	
Requirements:	MPC1, 386, 2MB RAM, SVGA Windows 3.1, MSCDEX 2.2
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Software Toolworks
Distributed by:	Software Toolworks
Retail Price:	$59.95
Hard Drive Space:	1.5 Meg
No. of Players:	One player

After choosing a country you can zoom in on its major cities and get all kinds of statistical information.

Choose any country from the World map and see a video highlighting its more scenic sights.

Just like a normal atlas, you can get all kinds of statistics on a country ranging from population to economic to health. Many of these statistics can be presented in graph form as well. If you travel abroad much, this can be a handy reference tool to use before you get were you are going. It has uses for both the student and business traveller.

A nice feature of Software Toolworks World Atlas is that you can add your own data and maps! Plus you can print out maps, including the more detailed city maps. Every home needs this! By the way, Brazil produces about 35,000 metric tons of goat meat per year! Umm! ***-Steven Greenlee***

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Acclaim MIDWAY HI TECH

Now you can make your own animated features!

You can even let your kids play with Knowledge Adventure's Magic Theatre (maybe)!

Here is a product that will allow your child (or you) to fully use his or her creativity. Magic Theatre is the latest offering from Knowledge Adventure and is a terrific package. Everything needed to put together your own short animated feature is here (within reason). Besides some minor limitations, the only other limitation Magic Theatre has is the boundary of your child's imagination.

Magic Theatre can be a hard drive hog if you're not careful. Each scene has the potential of taking up to 600K on the hard drive per minute. Imagine if

There are many different animation objects you can use in creating a full length animated feature.

your child has creatively put together a feature of 15 or 20 scenes! Then what if your child has a half dozen or more features saved? You'll need some sizeable chunks of hard drive space available for Magic Theatre in order to save all that creativity. Or just be aware you may need to do a little more hard drive housekeeping than normal. The program does need 3-4 MB of hard drive space for its files, which is a lot less than I expected.

Also, there are some other requirements you'll need. The program will allow your child to record his or her voice as part of the feature. In order to do this you will need a good solid sound card with microphone jack. A microphone does come with the CD. It is something of a bummer that you can't have sound effects and recorded voice in the same scene. Still, that is not enough to dampen the fun of Magic Theatre.

Magic Theatre by Knowledge Adventure	
Requirements:	386 PC, Windows 3.1, SVGA, CD-ROM, Mike Jack, 4 MB RAM
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Instinct Corporation
Distributed by:	Knowledge Adventure
Retail Price:	$59.95
Hard Drive Space:	4 Meg
Age:	6 & UP

Computer!

Mouse.

This program is simple to use, although younger children will probably need some walk-through help, especially when it comes to recording. Otherwise, you point to what you want and click.

You can do a lot of things in one scene or you can keep it simple. You build the scene using a variety of tools identified only by icons that are found around the feature screen. Along the left side of the screen are paint brushes and palettes. Choose an oval, place it on the screen, choose a color, and then right click to fill in the oval with that color. You can do that with the supplied shapes or draw your own.

The most used icons will be found along the top of the screen. The Scenery icon is the one with a mountain, the Animation library is the fish icon, while the Objects library is found by clicking the hot air balloon icon. The Trace library is the icon found with a partial star on it. There are several pictures to choose, from objects to people faces. Choose a trace picture, for instance, and stamp it onto your screen. Next pick a color and a brush then trace it just like in a coloring book. Before you can fill in the trace you must play it back first. The trace picture will disappear leaving only your colored tracings. You are then able to pick a color to fill in the spaces.

The feature control icons are located along the right side of the screen. The first icon of three tiles is used to access your saved files. You can also delete save files once the options appear. Next is the icon to use when you want to make a new feature. Whatever feature you had been working on will be automatically saved. Then the postcard icon designates a new scene. For instance, when you have finished one scene, you click on the postcard and a new blank screen will appear. The scene you had been working on will be automatically saved. But if you don't like the screen you have been working on, start fresh by clicking on the postcard icon with a big X on it.

Along the bottom row of icons you'll find the sound effects buttons, the record icons, the VCR buttons and then sound on/off icons. The interface is fairly simple to use and it will take only an hour or two before you'll be mastering the main elements of putting together a feature. Then your child can create more sophisticated features using the draw and paint functions, combined with library clips, sound effects and recorded narration. Magic Theatre simply is a terrific program and once the kids have been shooed off to bed feel free to create your own masterpiece!

-Steven Greenlee

Each scene of the feature can be created according to your child's whims and wishes.

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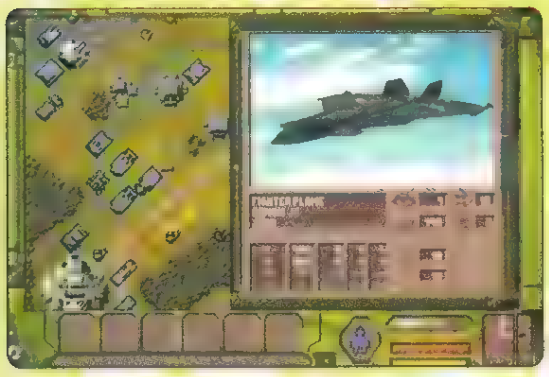

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Now kids have their own multi-media dictionary!

Macmillan's Dictionary For Children makes words more fun to explore and remember.

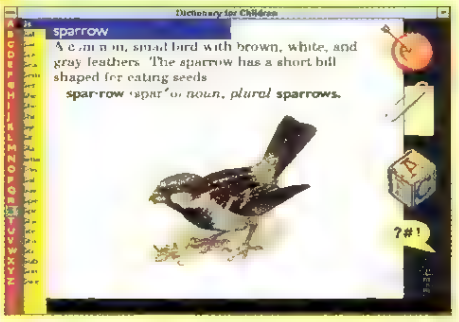
Macmillan Dictionary For Children is a solid multi-media reference tool for kids ages six to twelve. It contains the definition and pronounciation of some 12,000 words. As a matter of fact, a child can click on any word in any definition and get the correct pronunciation! Some of the words come with illustrations or pictures, while other words have their "sounds" demonstrated by clicking on a button found underneath the definition. Besides definition, some words will contain a pop-up window which gives a short history of the word. In addition, at the beginning of each letter of the alphabet, the letter's history is explained.

The Dictionary is easy to install and needs about five MB hard drive space. It needs about 2.4 MB for dictionary files and then it gives you an option of copying over some animation files. Those files need an additional 2 MB of hard drive space. The animation files are for Zak, a cartoonish inhabitant of the dictionary who provides some comic relief. If your child clicks on him as he is hiding on the randomly selected pages, he performs an animated action like crying, showing surprise and more. Also included in the package are some word games. "Hangman", "Words Within" and "Spelling Bee" are available to play and besides being fun, the games help youngsters build their vocabulary.

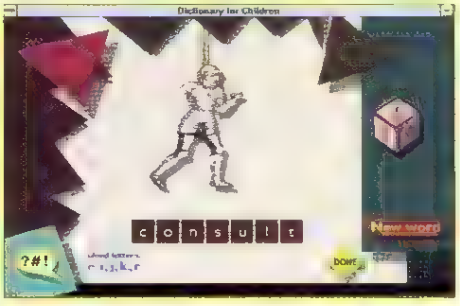
This is not necessarily a product that kids will want to play like a game, but it's so user friendly it may encourage a child to use the dictionary instead of ignoring an unknown word.

-Steven Greenlee

Dictionary For Children by Macmillan	
Requirements:	386sx, Windows 3.1, CD-ROM 4MB RAM, Mouse, SVGA
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Macmillan New Media
Distributed by:	Macmillan New Media
Retail Price:	$29.95
Hard Drive Space:	5 Meg
Age:	7-12


Dictionary for Children
sparrow
A common, small bird with brown, white, and gray feathers. The sparrow has a short bill shaped for eating seeds.
spar·row 'spar'ō noun, plural sparrows.

Besides definitions, there are some 400 illustrations and hundreds of sound files.



Play the classic word game Hangman to sharpen word skills.

It's an African scavenger hunt and you're invited!

Find the animals of Africa, learn about them and win the game in this offering from SWeDE.

There is a whole line of The Scavenger Hunt Adventure Series, but the first hybrid is Africa. This hybrid product can be installed on MPC and/or Macintosh computers. The game play is in the form of a scavenger hunt. Your child is given a list of six animal clues and they must search the African landscape and find the animal who fits the clue. This is accomplished by using a camera. The camera icon is always displayed at the bottom of the game screen. When your child finds an animal he or she thinks fits one of the clues, they can click on the camera, which changes the cursor to a camera box, and then move the cursor over the animal and left click again. Once that is done, he or she can click on the list icon, which will zip the scavenger back to the clue screen. Just click on the square believed to be the description pictured. If it is the right picture, it will appear; if not there is a beep.

The animals come from the African Savanna, the Sahara Desert and Madagascar island, so the hunter will come across some strange animals indeed. Animals, plants and regions all come with informational blurbs, while animals come with an additional interactive questions game.

Africa does look unique with its hand painted renderings and QuickTime™ sequences, but it does seem to be a bit laborious. Your child will have to do a lot of clicking to search the areas (the 8 point navigation maybe too much) and may tire of the slow progress. Africa is for younger children, but not for teens.

-Steven Greenlee

Scavenger Hunt by SWeDe	
Requirements:	386 or Macintosh II or higher, 4MB RAM, QuickTime
Available for:	MPC and Macintosh
Designed by:	SWeDe
Distributed by:	Davidson
Retail Price:	$49.95
Hard Drive Space:	2 Meg
Age:	6 & UP

Every animal you can find has an accompanying information window.

Read the clues and search for an animal which fills the description. Take its picture and see if it fits.

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Making Trivia a Fun and Learning Adventure.

Morgan Interactive makes learning science and geography fun with Morgan's Trivia Machine.

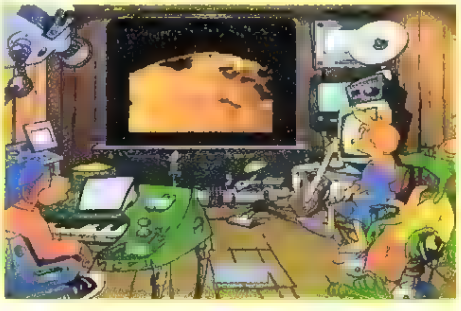
Making learning fun and effective is one of the great challenges of educating our children. The answer may be the computer showing up in our homes, or at least it might be the driving force behind any solution. More specifically, it will be the software running on computers which holds the promise of presenting educational materials to children enabling them to learn and retain better. Morgan Interactive's Morgan's TriviaMachine is one such piece of software.

This is the newest title released by Morgan Interactive in their children's edutainment line. The previous introduced Morgan the 11 year old chimp in Recess in Greece. In TriviaMachine, kids are again invited up to Morgan's super hi-tech, parent-proof treehouse. Kids are asked to answer science and geography questions and play in teams (I played as Skater Gator). QuickTime™ video as well as film-quality animation is used to answer questions. There are six skill levels and over a thousand questions. What makes Morgan's TriviaMachine a strong package is the cartoon like animation. It is very good and the characters are given personalities and have been given the ability to talk with each other, engaging in entertaining conversations. HAM 9000 (the trivia machine) is a jokester as well. All this helps keep children involved instead of just boring them to death by asking questions relentlessly

Could this type of software be the future "teacher" of our children? Many think so!

-Steven Greenlee

Morgan's Trivia Machine	
by Morgan Interactive	
Requirements:	LCII, 4 MB RAM 256 colors, 6.0.7
Available for:	Macintosh
Designed by:	Morgan Interactive
Distributed by:	Morgan Interactive
Retail Price:	$34.95
Hard Drive Space:	0 to 3 Meg
Age:	7-14



Video clips are used to show what trivia machine HAM 9000 is talking about.

What helps cats hear so well?
Their ears move independently
Their ears are fine-tuned
Their ears are oh so cute
Their ears are pointed

The questions are in the areas of science and geography, plus some from grab bag categories.

I Want to be a Firefighter when I grow up!

Macmillian heats up your kid's computer by taking them into the world of battling blazes!

It used to be when you were a kid, the school would sponsor trips to the local fire department Now kids can tour the firehouse whenever they wish via CD-ROM. Macmillian's Firefighter! is an interactive program that not only entertains, but also offers a fire safety learning presentation

The installation is something a child could do You simply copy the Firefighter! icon from the CD to the hard drive. It needs about two megabytes of hard drive space The program also needs the latest QuickTime™ version 1.6 Other than that, just double click on the hard drive icon and your child will be ready to explore the world of firefighters.

Mike, the can man, is your host and guide He tells you of three basic areas you will need to explore But first, it is a good idea to go through training. In the Report for Duty mode, the child will have to answer a series of questions in each presentation. Those answers are presented in the Training area, so its a good place to start

To help keep up with all the information Mike gives your child a PAX, something like a handheld computer. This allows access to a ton of information from fire safety to uniforms to fire science and equipment. This area also includes a glossary. The interactive portion has two areas to explore; the firehouse and the alarm.

This is an okay title. It does seem to be a bit more heavy on the Q & A than I would prefer and it lacks dramatic firefighting video clips. I don't think any kid older than 13 would want to spend much time with this.

-Steven Greenlee

Firefighter!	
by Macmillian New Media	
Requirements:	68030/25MHz, CD-ROM, 5MB RAM, System 6.07
Available for:	Macintosh
Designed by:	DI Group
Distributed by:	Macmillian New Media
Retail Price:	$ 29.95
Hard Drive Space:	2 Meg
Age:	7 & Up

Help Section
Headquarters
Alarm Bell
Ring the fire bell to go out on an alarm where you'll learn firefighting and rescue procedures. You'll also have a chance to prove your new skills
Personal Advanced Explorer

The interactive areas are very easy to access; just click on the firehouse or the alarm bell.

A wealth of firefighting information can be found by using the Personal Advanced Explorer.

SURE YOU COULD DIE, BUT THAT'S LIFE.

- The Gorene Empire is at war with the Alien Alliance. The ally you choose and the battle strategy you devise will determine who controls the Ascalon Rift.
- Choose your ally from either of opposing sides. Fly eleven different ships loaded with weaponry. Depart for over 100 varying missions. Then switch sides for unparalleled replayability.
- Plot strategies, orchestrate battles, fly stealth missions, and conquer territories, with full combat inside nebulas and asteroid fields.
- Rivering hyper-realistic 3 D graphics, with fully texture-mapped ships, on-the-fly translucency, Gouraud and Phong shading, and cinematic multimedia videos.
- Driving music, searing sound effects and, on the CD-ROM version, fully digitized speech delivered by professional actors.

FOR IBM PC AND IBM PC CD-ROM

Distributed by GAMETEK

TAKE 2 INTERACTIVE SOFTWARE

HAS THE LEGACY OF SUMMER CES RUN OUT?

EVEN IF IT HAS, THE 1994 SHOW WILL LONG BE REMEMBERED AS AN INFLUENTIAL CONVENTION.

(When company presidents need analysis of hot trends and future possibilities, one of the names on speed dial is "Arnie Katz." Writer, lecturer, designer, consultant and assistant publisher and editor of Electronic Games, Arnie gives readers of Computer Game Review an insider's look at the major trends emanating from the Summer Consumer Electronics Show that will carry through this fall and winter gaming season.)

The 1994 Summer Consumer Electronics Show (SCES) was the last of a series of events that dates from before the dawn of the Great Video Game Boom of the late 1970s and the debut of mass market home computers like the Commodore 64. Time has caught up with SCES, and the sponsoring Electronic Industry Association (EIA) plans to replace it with an event in Philadelphia next May called CES Interactive (CES-I).

If EIA wins its struggle against the aggressive encroachment of E3, CES-I will carry the torch into the new millennium. The new convention centers on interactive electronic entertainment, our meat-and-potatoes, but it won't have the grandeur and sheer size of SCES. And to turn W. C. Fields on his ear, on the whole, I'd rather be in Chicago.

How ironic that the last SCES may turn out to be the most influential! Some shows have served as the backdrop to more and bigger deals, and others have toted up heavier retailer orders, but the 1994 SCES will always be remembered as the one at which the interactive entertainment industry took its pulse, squared its shoulders, and strode into the future.

Glowing metaphors aside, this was the moment that multimedia assumed the leadership position. Led by CD-ROM's incredible growth, multimedia metamorphosed from a minor curiosity into the prime focus of interactive entertainment product development in little more than a year.

Few expected it to happen so quickly, but hardware and software sales success made this switch inevitable.

The latest, upwardly revised prediction is that there will be 17 million CD-ROM drives installed by 1995. The price of drives has plummeted to under $150 for a single-speed drive and under $250 for the preferred double-speed models. Further price cuts, anticipated post-Christmas 1994, are making a CD-ROM drive pretty much standard equipment.

Multimedia entertainment software sales are mushrooming. The Myst racked up 600,000 units at retail in its first six months, and several other multimedia titles are doing nearly as well. While SCES showcased many database-oriented products, like Microsoft's Complete Baseball, double-speed drives have tempted many publishers to bring all the popular electronic gaming genres to home multimedia.

Accolade demonstrated a football game, designed by Blank Berlyn, which uses new software technology to put the grid title on PC CD-ROM and Macintosh CD simultaneously. If this catches on, it would weld together two previously distinct markets, increasing total sales potential in the process. Besides giving Macintosh owners a wider choice of software, it will encourage many small publishers to support both forms of CD-ROM instead of concentrating on just one platform.

Cartridges and floppies didn't vanish in a puff of mystic smoke at SCES. In fact, Nintendo enjoyed its best product show in three or four years with Donkey Kong Country and several other strong introductions. Lion King, Earthworm Jim, and one or two other cartridges figure to sell a million or more units this fall and winter.

But the handwriting is on the wall for cartridges. The 16-bit machines have this Christmas and maybe a little more. And though several games will crack the one-million-unit barrier, any new entry without a heavy media push behind it will sell substantially fewer copies than comparable games in 1993. Except for the few mega-hits, 16-bit video gaming is turning into a rental market.

Only one of the "next generation" consoles utilizes cartridge as a software delivery medium. Though Nintendo will stick with silicon in its Ultra 64 game console, due in fall 1995, Sega and Sony, like 3DO and Philips, are building their machines around CD-ROM technology. The prevailing opinion at SCES, which has gathered force since, is that Nintendo will produce a CD-ROM peripheral for the Ultra 64 within about a year of the roll-out.

Even the big-time video games unveiled at SCES reflected the importance of multimedia. That's what the public wants and expects from its electronic games, and video game publishers are trying their best to give it to them within the limitations of their hardware.

The use of SGI graphics, in particular, is a major video game concession to the consumer fascination with multimedia. Donkey Kong Country and Earthworm Jim are counting on this 3-D graphics generator to keep 16-bit owners buying despite the rising hype for forthcoming super systems.

Going hand-in-hand with CD-ROM is Modem Mania. Everyone's logging on for fun, whether it's one of the national networks, local BBSes, or the strange and wonderful Internet. America On Line announced at SCES that it had more than doubled its subscriber base in the previous 12 months. It has since eclipsed one million users. ImagiNation Network, Prodigy, and Delphi are also on the fast track.

Modem and network gaming has now become more than a novelty to impress the chain store buyers. A lot of games, including Doom II and Corridor 7, are involving thousands of telecommunicants in head to head gaming.

Despite progress in artificial intelligence, there's still no substitute for testing skill against another human. Economically priced modems are transforming computer gaming from a largely solitaire pastime into one that mixes solo and multiplayer action.

Modem play suddenly makes computer multimedia look a lot more appealing to video gamers, who show a marked preference for competition, When these millions of gamers make their next hardware purchase, they won't be as quick to rule out a home computer instead of another cartridge machine.

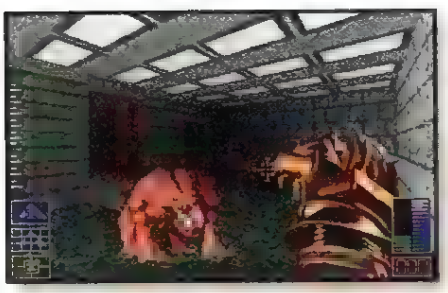
The Summer Consumer Electronics Show is gone, but it will never be forgotten by America's gamers. It set in motion the trends which should shape the entire hobby for the next several years.

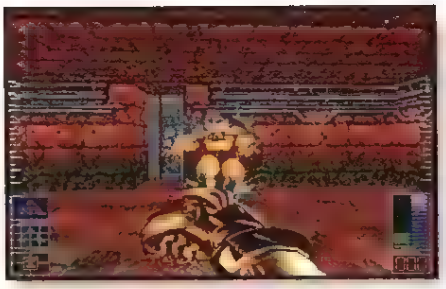
Next time, I'll look at the most compelling computer and multimedia titles for this winter. Take it easy on the Halloween candy, and I'll see you all then!

-Arnie Katz

ONLY ONE OF THE "NEXT GENERATION" CONSOLES UTILIZES CARTRIDGE AS A SOFTWARE DELIVERY MEDIUM.

. . .TO TURN W. C. FIELDS ON HIS EAR, ON THE WHOLE, I'D RATHER BE IN CHICAGO.





256 color VGA displays

MEET CYCLONES HEAD-ON

No, we're not talking about twisters that wipe out trailer parks in the Midwest. We're referring to Cybernetic Clones, deadly creations of an alien race bent on Earth's conquest.

To add insult to injury, these CyClones are actually captured humans transformed into flesh steel monstrosities.

As Earth's defender armed with hi-tech weaponry, you're dying to jump into action. Especially when this futuristic adventure promises some of the most spectacular full-motion video you've ever seen. Plus an advanced smooth scrolling, head-on perspective. Incredible cine matics. And state-of-the art digitized voices, sizzling sound effects and breath-taking music.

CyClones

Catapulting you into a total multimedia experience!

TO ORDER Visit your retailer or call 1-800 245 4525 with Visa or MasterCard (U.S. & Canada only please)

On CD ROM and 3.5 disks for IBM & Compatibles

Actual images from the game. Screen shots of CyClones awaiting digitization.

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THE QUICK AND EASY ROUTE INTO GAMING FANDOM.

IF REVIEWING SOUNDS LIKE TOO MUCH WORK AND ART ISN'T YOUR BAG, YOU STILL HAVE SOMETHING TO OFFER.

Some gamers mistakenly believe they can't participate in fandom just because they lack the time, money and/or energy to publish a fanzine. This column puts faneds in the spotlight, but there are many fine fans, such as Russ Perry, who are highly active without doing a lot of publishing themselves.

Subscribing isn't a long-term answer. It's a great way to sample the fun of fandom, but just paying for zines isn't quite the same as being an active fan. Even at the cheap prices charged by most faneds (fanzine editors), it's too expensive to subscribe to more than a few of the 200 or so available publications.

If you can't even draw Pac-Man, and writing a review sounds too much like homework, there's still one more type of fanac: letters of comment (locs). They're cheap, a snap to produce, and much prized by every faned. Write a loc on every fanzine you receive, and you will never be without new ones in the mail.

The best way to write a loc is to think about points you'd like to make as you read a fanzine. What would you say if you had that bullheaded editor right in your face? Some letterhacks (the slang for a regular loc writer) make notes in the margins, others put a check mark next to comment-worthy passages, and still others just wing it. Whatever works is right

Concentrate on discussing the points raised in an article or column, not merely reviewing the fanzine. Whether you thought it was an incisive commentary or a blithering mess certainly has a place in a loc, but focus on what the writer *said* more than the way he said it.

And that is absolutely all there is to letters of comment. Let's look at a few titles that might inspire the budding letter hack.

Fantazine #8

Edited by Pat Reynolds

1740 Millbrook SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49508

Bimonthly, $2 per issue, 26 pages

"Fantazine Crashes SCES" is the kind of personal, yet informative article that keeps me reading fanzines. Well, that, and the need to have something to review in this column every month. Pat toured exhibits, talked with industry figures, and came away with five pages of reportage about all the new games and systems. Adrian Proctor contributes a page of his SCES experience, which works well with Pat's account.

Other highlights include Pat's exceptionally original analysis at the current state of electronic gaming, and Tyrone Rodriguez's look at the Super Game Boy peripheral. Pat charges that multimedia entertainment software neglects the fun quotient and correctly predicts that the hobby will be in trouble if multimedia publishers don't give us plenty of captivating, playable disks.

The issue also reviews several new games and a selection of fanzines. Pat gets better at this every issue, and some of his comments about ways to improve publications make instructive reading.

. . .JUST PAYING FOR ZINES ISN'T QUITE THE SAME AS BEING AN ACTIVE FAN.

Fantazine has now "arrived" as a top-level fanzine. Pat's publication is sure to interest anyone who loves interactive electronic entertainment, and it's this month's highest recommendation.

Hardcore #2

Edited by Tyrone Rodriguez

1122 N. Berni St., Santa Ana, CA 92703-1506

Frequent, $1.50 per issue, 12 pages

Many times, the second issue is a truer indicator of a fanzine's future worth than the first. At least that's what a lot of people like me, who did bad first zines, believe. Whatever validity of this piece of wisdom, it seems to work for Tyrone's feisty, funny fanzine. **Hardcore #1** flashed brilliance but it seemed uncoordinated and tentative. It's still obvious that **Hardcore** is in the early stages of its development, but the overall effect of #2 is far, far superior.

Russ Perry, Jr., whom I mentioned in the introduction, weighs in with a lengthy, intelligent letter to kick off three pages of reader feedback. Tyrone critiques fanzines, comments on gaming, and reviews major titles like Virtua Racing. Also on hand are a whimsical column by Brian Pacula and a very amusing column, chapter 9 of "Real Life Stories," by Pat Reynolds.

If fandom gave out rookie of the year awards, Tyrone Rodriguez would certainly be one of the 1994 candidates for the award. Risk $1.50 and discover why.

Infestation #8

Edited by Alan Lanoie

204 E. Main St., Greenfield, TN 38230

Frequent, 75¢ per issue, 12 pages

Hey fans, to paraphrase Lou Reed, take a walk on the wild side. This is inspired lunacy, handwritten with illos that echo the minicomic sensibility. He may not have a word processor, or even a typewriter, but Alan comes armed with opinions of every facet of gaming—and many non-gaming topics as well.

Alan doesn't mince words, and some of his zine is fairly strong medicine. That's what makes **Infestation** such a refreshing change-of-pace from other fanzines, even those that are high quality in a more standard way.

Jagged #1

Edited by Brian McKenzie

8751 Rosalie Ave., Brentwood, MO 63144

Frequent, $1.50, 14 pages

This fanzine stresses Atari's Jaguar, but Brian is no pigheaded system partisan. He's enthusiastic about the "next generation" machine, but not to the total exclusion of other types of electronic gaming.

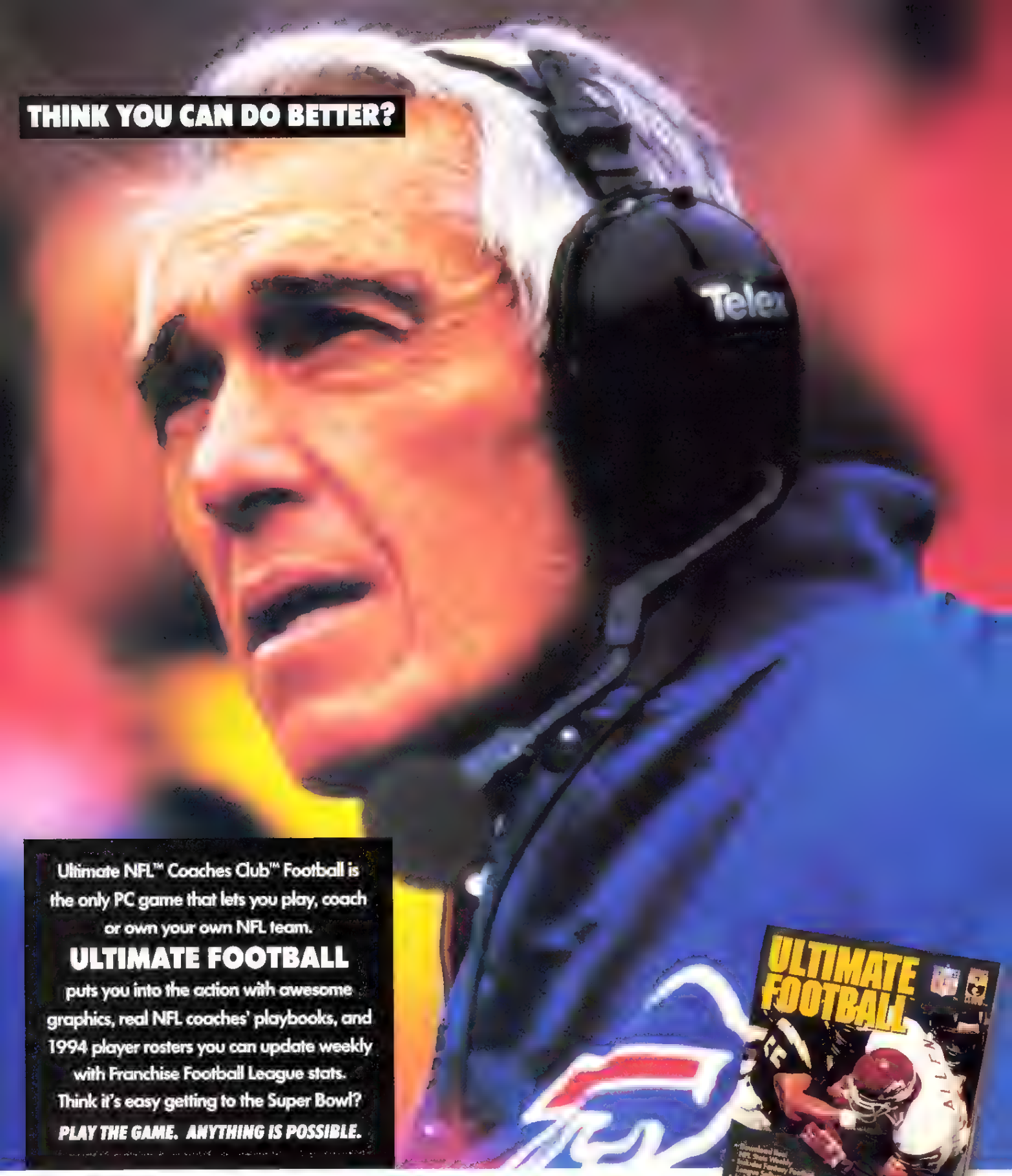
Brian's summer CES report is less fact-packed than some you'll read, but I enjoyed the personal anecdotes as much or more than the straight reportage. Brian is also an artist, so his CES presentation is livelier than pure text.

Not all the material is game-related. Irene Liu, for instance, talks about the caning of Michael Faye in Singapore. It's controversial, but she states her position on the case very well. This page will launch a dozen letters in the next **Jagged**, and I can't wait to read them!

Also outside the sphere of gaming is a page of brief album reviews. More detail about each CD would make Brian's recommendations more useful.

Jagged, despite the expectable rough edges, is off to a strong start. Give a newcomer a break and send for #2

Attention fanzine editors: If you'd like your fanzine reviewed in this column, send it to: Arnie Katz, 330 S. Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107. I read and save every zine sent, and I'll try to describe as many of them as possible each month.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Ultimate NFL™ Coaches Club™ Football is the only PC game that lets you play, coach or own your own NFL team.
ULTIMATE FOOTBALL
puts you into the action with awesome graphics, real NFL coaches' playbooks, and 1994 player rosters you can update weekly with Franchise Football League stats.
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PLAY THE GAME. ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE.
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For IBM-PC & Compatibles on CD-ROM

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TSR AND INTERPLAY: IS IT LOVE AT FIRST BYTE?

SWEET SUMMER ROMANCE OR LASTING COMMITMENT? READ ON AND FIND THE TRUTH!

To use the punch line of an old, slightly blue joke, hold onto your hat, we may end up miles from here

It almost sounds like the plot of a movie. A man and his wife, after several years of bliss and lots of kids decide to strike off on their own. They've been a performing act together, playing to rave reviews all across the country and the world, and each have had their own successful solo projects as well. But the break-up is inevitable and they decide to go their separate ways, with the woman, who went through all the trouble of bearing the kids, taking custody.

They split and go it alone, both finding individual success. The woman is having a lot of success, with the man rumored to be on the verge of breaking into a new field on his own. But he's tired of coming home to an empty house now that the wife and kids are gone, and he's tired of eating T.V. dinners alone and falling asleep in front of the tube. So he goes out to the bars and magic happens. Across the room, their eyes meet. Sparks fly, pulses quicken, phone numbers are exchanged. And before you know it, the man and his new girlfriend are getting hitched. Brings a lump to the old throat, doesn't it?

But wait! That new wife has her own past. She's been seen around the town with an old flame, and that old flame just happens to be one of the main competitors of her new husband!

Now substitute the name **TSR** for the man, **SSI** for his first wife, the **Gold Box** series, **Ravenloft**, etc. for the kids. Finally, put in the name of **Interplay** for the new wife and you have a good picture of just what's been happening with RPG giant TSR and their bid to reenter the CRPG market. Having broken off relations with SSI earlier in the year, it was rumored that TSR would pursue producing games on their own. This all went out the window when TSR signed with Interplay. The current hype from both sides is a lot of back-patting and ethereal joy as both companies publicly state how great the other company truly is The deal is that Interplay has the rights to all of the electronic licensing of the **Forgotten Realms** and **Planetscape** product lines

Interplay's old flame in this case is **Steve Jackson Games**, who Interplay signed an agreement with earlier in the year. The agreement was to produce games using the **GURPS** (Generic Universal Role-Playing System) engine

Kirk Green, the Director of Marketing Communications for Interplay, commented that the first Interplay/TSR products won't come off the line until Christmas, '95. His information states that the deal with SJG is still in effect, and in fact, some of the technology that has been developed for the GURPS titles may be used in the production of the TSR games, as both are Interplay productions. This has led to the rumor of the company's new motto: Interplay: Prepare to be assimilated. No one at Steve Jackson Games or TSR was available for comment.

Also in a transitional mode is **Sierra On-Line** As much of the office prepares to move to Washington in and around the Seattle area, the president of the

ACCESS Brings You a Virtual World Interactive Movie!

What Reviewers Are Saying:

"Lots of games push the envelope—Under a Killing Moon blows it to smithereens!"
—William Trotter, PC Entertainment

"A ground breaking CD adventure!"
—Joyce Worley, Electronic Games

"Under a Killing Moon combines the best elements of movies and computer games... It literally pulls you into the screen."
—Denny Atkin, Entertainment Editor, Compute Magazine

This category-creating Interactive Movie from ACCESS Software goes light years beyond any other product labeled "interactive." *Under a Killing Moon* takes you to the streets of post World War III San Francisco and casts you into the role of Tex Murphy, Private Investigator, who first appeared in *Mean Streets*, then *Martian Memorandum*. *Under a Killing Moon* is a Virtual World full of people and places so richly detailed, you'll feel like you're actually there.

company's publishing division, **James Thomas**, announced his resignation. The announcement comes just as the company has started a global restructuring including an almost total envelopment of long-time subsidiary **Dynamix**. All upcoming products from Dynamix, even such signature titles as the soon-to-be-released **The Incredible Machine 2** will be shipped with a Sierra imprint, with Dynamix's name not even present on the box itself. The meaning of Dynamix's old tagline ("Dynamix: A part of the Sierra family") has now taken on a whole new meaning. It's a little sad that such a bright spot in the industry is being absorbed like this.

At **GenCon** this year, **MicroProse** announced that they have signed an agreement with **Wizards of the Coast**, the creators of **Magic The Gathering**. If you've been comatose, this is the card game that has absolutely taken hold of the RPG circuit. Look for this title to garner a lot of attention in the months ahead. Also early from GenCon is word that **Origin** is looking to capitalize on the **Ultima** name by producing a pen-and-paper RPG. Hints abound regarding a **Wing Commander** and **Strike Commander** RPG as well.

Look for things to get a little. . .hellish at **Magnet Studios** as the company works with the cast and sets of **Hellraiser IV** for an upcoming game. Maybe they can jointly develop a PC Cenobite. . .nah!

Gametek is one of the first PC game companies to start exploring that nebulous and undefined world of virtual reality with their announcement of the formation of a new unit called **Alternative Reality Technologies** (ART) to coordinate all Gametek product development and oversee future growth in the Florida-based company's development capabilities. Slicing through the gobbledegook, this means that the newly formed branch will be in charge of generating the new technology that will drive Gametek's products in the future. It does show that the company is willing to invest a lot more of its time, money and personnel resources into the pursuit of the PC market, an industry that Gametek has largely ignored over the past few years in favor of the various video game systems. Nice to see them waking up to a more interesting market! Gametek has also announced an increase in development in Europe with the expanded group locating in the company's current offices situated just outside of London.

Creator Capital and its subsidiary **Sky Games** has a new way for you to spend some time on longer flights. The two companies have announced the development of the **Sky Games R/C** in-flight gaming system, "R/C" standing for remote control. This will allow, allegedly, the instantaneous introduction or removal during flight via satellite of Sky Games gaming software to and from compatible in-flight entertainment (IFE) systems. This will allow any airline to retrofit gaming into an aircraft with an existing IFE system. Additionally, it can be monitored and removed if necessary due to some law in a particular jurisdiction. Currently the system is being offered to international carriers, so you'll need to fly overseas to be able to play along.

Just a reminder that you can contact the editor of this here publication via e-mail anytime your little heart desires through the addresses below. Keep in mind that anything you send over the e-mail may be used in the Postage Due column. Also, at the moment, the reviewing staff doesn't have an e-mail-box through CGR. Until they do, you can drop off messages for them at Steve's mailbox, and he'll forward them along. Those addresses:

CompuServe: 75052,1672

GEnie: 75052.1672@compuserve.com @INET#

Everywhere else, including **America Online**, **Delphi Internet**, etc.: 75052.1672@compuserve.com

We'll print these addresses in the Postage Due section of all subsequent issue of **CGR**. We'll see y'all again next month. Until then, don't work your joystick too hard. Later!

UNDER A
Killing Moon
Q: What do film stars Brian Keith, Margot Kidder, & Russell Means all have in common?
A: They all star in ACCESS Software's new CD thriller Under a Killing Moon!
Format: 2 CD's for MS-DOS
Coming Soon to a PC Near You!
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ACCESS

YOU ANI

Your heart is racing.

Th-thump. Th-thump.

It's pumping as fast as your legs.

You don't notice the gentle breeze, the noon-day sky.

"Truly innovative." Strategy Plus

You are totally focused.

On the smell.

Just the smell.

Could be the first thing you sink your teeth into, in days.

Dust, pebbles, sticks.

They're flying.

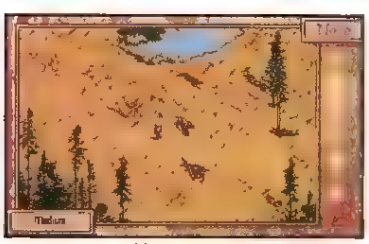
Then you pounce.

Suddenly. Stealthily.

You break its neck.

You're hungry.

You are such an animal.



"It's addictive." PC Gamer

Wild Weekend

Win a wilderness adventure. See package for details.

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Really.
In this wilderness survival adventure,
that's exactly what you are.
A wolf.
And you experience all the sights,
sounds...and smells...firsthand.

Mating tips included

That's what makes this game unlike
any other.
It's realistic.
So realistic that it just might blow
you away.
(Or maybe a predator will.)
Will you survive?
You'll have to hunt.
Fight.
Mate.
(Hey, maybe it's not so hard after all.)
See your retailer or call 800-943-3664.

WOLF

ENTERTAINMENT

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THE DOCTOR GEARS UP FOR A LONG WINTER IN VEGAS.

A LOOK AT WHAT QUESTIONS MIGHT ARISE WITH THOSE HIGH-TECH CHRISTMAS GOODIES. . .

The autumn leaves are already turning a bright shade of green out here in Las Vegas, and the crisp fall temperatures often drop below 100 degrees during the day.

My eons of experience in practice (14 years as of October '94) tell me that this means a salvo of holiday purchases—hardware and soft—are in the works. To that end, let's answer some of this month's most prescient queries...

Q: With the arrival of the 586 standard in the PC universe, I was curious: which will be the first software releases to take advantage of the Pentium's hot, high-powered hardware?

Steve Fagin
San Francisco, CA

A: *Good question, Steve—good enough to get you a Game Doctor Prize Packet. Anyway, the first generation of games designed for the pentium platform will, of course, also be playable of 486 (and, in most cases, even on 386) systems; however, only the 586 machines will be able to run these games at optimal speed and graphic levels.*

Examples: Access Software's Under a Killing Moon, which will allow the user to set the size of the display screen. There are several settings, the smallest being comparable to the screen size used in Drew Pictures' Iron Helix (Spectrum-HoloByte), while the maxxed out, 586 edition offers an impressive, full-screen display.

Sierra's Front Page Sports: Baseball, meanwhile, runs very nicely on a 486DX, but, once again, to get full detail and speed a 586 is required.

Expect a lot of products at this level to appear during the next six to eight months; it should be pretty similar to the way in which the 486 supplanted the 386—most new games can still be played on the 386, but you wouldn't necessarily call them playable—if ya know what I mean?

Q: I love sound in my games and recently purchased a Sound Blaster 16 and those little computer speakers. Unfortunately, they could [barely] produce enough sound to make my mom tell me to turn them down (which isn't very loud); so what should I get? I want to hear the aliens' death screams in X-Com really loud!

Jamie Seward
Golden, BC

A: *I suspect the problem can be traced to those "little computer speakers;" get a set with a preamp so you can boost the anemic PC-driven audio. Also, so your mom doesn't send me a letterbomb, may I suggest you invest in a high-quality set of headphones, which can also be outfitted with a preamplifier.*

Are we all still friends?

Q: My current video card uses the Trident 8900 chip with 1meg RAM. I am mostly in DOS with very little Windows use and games make up the major use. Would cards like Criterion Graphics Genie or ATI Graphics Ultra Plus or Diamond Stealth 24 offer me any increase in video speed for my DOS applications and games? Also, with the 486 and onboard math co-processor becoming the standard entry point for a computer buyer, are game manufacturers using this math co-processor for games and, if so, would the 387 math co-processor help me out? I can pick one up for under $50.

Joseph Torzewski
Granger, IN

A: *Answer 1: the Doc hasn't personally tested every board you mentioned, but the DS24 and ATI Graphics cards should definitely improve your game playing. And remember, very soon DOS games will be running in Chicago, so you'll also need GUI speed. Answer 2: publishers are indeed taking advantage of the co-processors, but the 387 won't help you; they require a 486/66 config, minimum. The 386 just doesn't have the computer testosterone to handle it; adding a sight to a musket helps, but it still isn't of much use against an Ingram Gun. Upgrade your whole board to a 486, Joseph.*

Q: I am going to purchase a new system, a DX4-100 or some Pentium-based system. Since I am buying this computer mainly for games, I am interested in knowing which card/setup is best for my purpose.

Dominic Pang
New York, NY

A: *How about those Rangers, Dom?*

Refer to Joseph's Q for additional video card info. Also, remember to get a decent amount of onboard RAM—at least 2meg. The newest generation of video cards are using the full power of busses. The Doc's staff uses both the Thunderboard and Diamond Stealth 24 cards very happily.

Q: My dad just purchased a 586 Pentium/60 with 8 meg RAM. He says he likes to be on the cutting edge of technology so he has decided to also buy a CD-ROM drive and a new sound card. What is the best triple-speed CD-ROM out there and what do they cost?

Joshua Ceccarelli
San Bernardino, CA

A: *Well actually, Joshua, if being on the cutting edge is really all that important to your dad, then he should forget the triple-speed drives and look at a 4X, such as the NEC 4X Pro, which only costs in the $1,000 range.*

If, on the other hand, he can live with 3X, the price is closer to $600.

What price cutting edge, eh?

And that about finishes us off for this installment of Q&A. Remember to send those questions, comments, etc. to: **The Game Doctor (CGR), 330 S Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107**.

Aloha!

. . .HE SHOULD FORGET THE TRIPLE-SPEED DRIVES AND LOOK AT A 4X. . .

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HOWLS FILL THE NIGHT IN THE GREY LUNAR LIGHT...

IF YOU'VE EVER WANTED TO LIVE A DOG'S LIFE, WOLF WILL SOON BE ON THE SHELVES, ALTHOUGH IT WON'T BE FIDO YOU'LL BE CONTROLLING.

In a new twist for RPG/Adventure games, Sanctuary Woods will soon be releasing Wolf where you won't get to play a human/wizard or an elven/thief or a gnome/paladin. In fact, your character of choice won't even be walking on two legs. Instead, you'll play a canine/predator and will get to do keen wolf-things like search for food, raise pups and deal with the politics of a pack.

The game will include as many as 40 different scenarios with any variety of wolf characters. Each scenario demands that you complete a certain task to be successful, such as search for water for the survival of the whole pack. In one scenario, you play a young wolf who must follow the leadership of the "alpha male." Later, when you gets older, bigger and stronger, you must challenge this mentor for the leadership of the pack. If you succeed, the fate of the pack will then be up to you. You'll have to deal with pelt hunters and hunt your own prey at night. Although you have only one life, if you die, you can live on through the life of one of your pups.

The scenarios not only change the wolf character you control and the objective, but also the environment, the terrain and season. If it is winter, the pack will have a much harder time finding food, as resources are much more scarce. The three different environments are the Arctic, Timber and Plains.

There is also an option to just play the simulation where the only goal is survival. You can set the environment, including how many people are around, what the weather should be like and how scarce the resources are. After that, you spend your days searching for food and water, avoiding hunters and traps and much more. Life as a wolf is much more complicated then you might think.

Success in the game is determined by how well you understand the wolf and its surroundings. You must learn to distinguish different animal sounds and make frequent stops to look around and smell the air. When you do, the screen fills with icons showing what the wolf smells and approximately how far away it is. If you want to catch a deer, you must learn the ways of a predator and stalk carefully or you'll end up scaring your dinner away.

Keeping other wolf packs from taking your resources is accomplished by marking the area by spraying your scent around and creating boundaries. Although some of the habits of wolves might seem disgusting to us, to them its just everyday life in the wilderness.

To ensure an accurate simulation, Manley & Associates, the designers and developers of Wolf, consulted with Wolf Haven International, a Seattle-based non-profit organization devoted to the preservation of wolves in the Western United States. Consequently, part of the sales of Wolf will go towards benefiting Wolf Haven.

So that gamers can also share in their concern about the welfare of Wolves, the creators have included an "About Wolves" section. This interactive documentary explores the habits and instincts of wolves in their natural environment, as well as the physical characteristics that distinguish a wolf from a man. A number of documentary video clips will be included to give users a close look at the lives of these wild canines.

Wolf

by Sanctuary Woods

Game Summary

Role-play the character of a realistic wolf in the wilderness and deal with a range of natural elements, from weather to predators and food supply. There is also an interactive documentary that lets you explore the habits and instincts of wolves in their natural environment.

Requirements:	VGA, 2MB RAM, 386SX or better
Sound Support:	Sound Blaster and compatibles
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Manley & Associates
Distributed by:	Sanctuary Woods
Retail Price:	$49.95
Theme	RPG/Adventure Simulation
Release Date	4th Quarter, '94

BRIDGE OLYMPIAD

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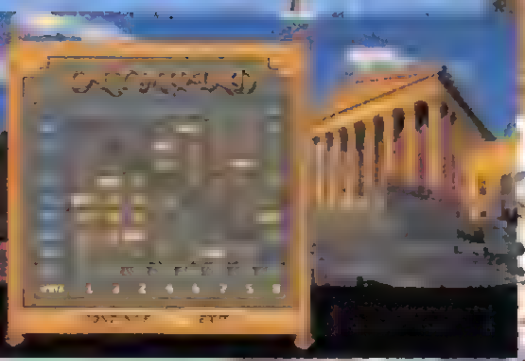

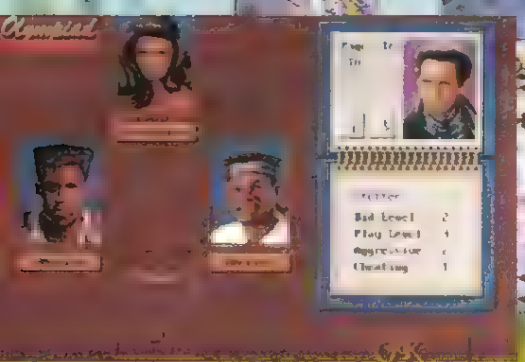

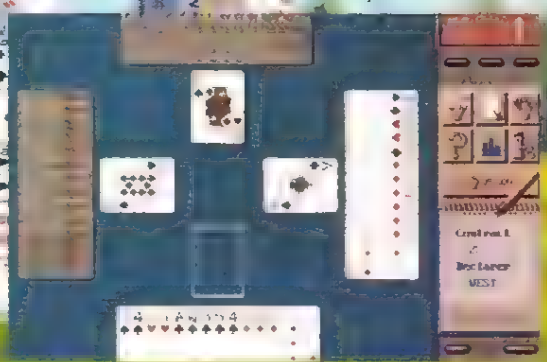

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. . .TIME-CONSUMING PUZZLE GAME WARNING. . .

DYNAMIX IS ABOUT TO CAUSE A TEMPORARY DECLINE IN THE PRODUCTIVITY OF AMERICA AGAIN, WITH THE SOON TO BE RELEASED THE INCREDIBLE MACHINE 2.

Get done whatever work you have to do until the end of the year because The Incredible Machine 2 is nearing completion. The many hours spent on the first two versions should be enough to lock many gamers up in front of their PC's for at least that much time with TIM2, so be forewarned. Kiss the children and your spouse and bid them a fond farewell.

Around 200 new puzzles are scheduled to be included in splendid 256 color VGA graphics. Your favorite objects are still in this one—some with a face-lift, others the same—in addition to a number of new ones. With TIM2 you will have lasers, anti-gravity pads, phaser guns, remote-controlled dynamite, blimps, lava lamps and more. Some old pals are also back such as Edison Cat, Newton Mouse, Bill the Goldfish and Mel Schlemming along with some new friends such as Blarney O'Reilly the leprechaun. Nudge Blarney and he will dance a jig for you.

An exciting new feature is the Head-to-Head play. Two players are given a specified amount of time to choose one of the allotted parts and place it. They alternate turns until the goal is achieved and the player who takes the last turn wins. You can go after the solution with each move if you can predict how many parts are needed to get there, or you can try to mislead your opponent by having him follow your lead in the wrong direction. You can only choose one part to use or move per turn, so the

The Incredible Machine 2
by Dynamix

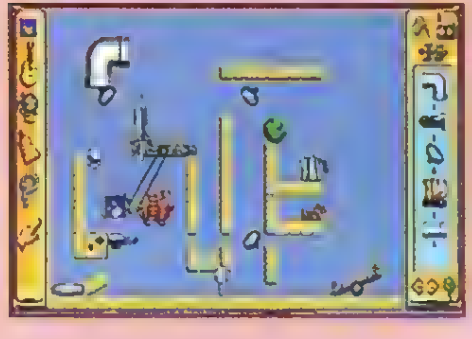
Game Summary

The Incredible Machine and The Even More Incredible Machine were scholastic achievements in creative problem solving. The soon to be released The Incredible Machine 2 will offer more than 150 Rube Goldberg type motion problems in spectacular 256 color VGA graphics and a MIDI compatible music track.

Requirements:	VGA-256, 386SX or better, 2MB RAM
Sound Support:	Most major sound cards
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Dynamix
Distributed by:	Sierra On-Line
Retail Price:	$45.95
Theme	Animated Puzzles
Release Date	4th Quarter, '94

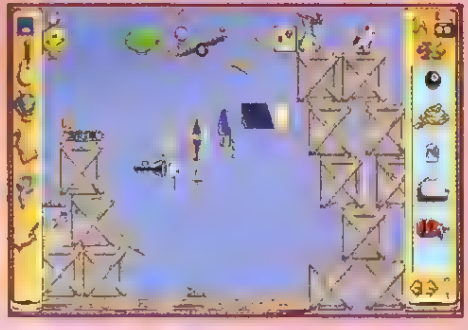
competition can get get pretty intriguing.

Like the last TIM, there is a puzzle constructor where you can build your own puzzles or alter existing ones. There is also a guided tour to teach new TIM users how the parts work, run the game and build their own machines and a tutorial that provides walk-throughs of building your own puzzles. To help frustrate and further annoy that gamer who's trying to solve the puzzles you create, you can tack on one of the various songs included in the game.



A new feature to TIM2 is an on-line hint option that will point out on the screen where certain objects will be placed. If you click on that spot it will give you a clue as to what object might be used there.

A great musical selection will be provided to entertain. This can be played over most sound cards, even with midi support. Each puzzle gets a different tune, or you can pick your favorite.



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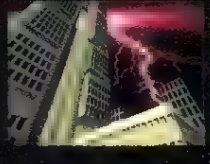

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A CAB RIDE IN N.Y. IS LIKE A RIDE WITH MISS DAISY

GAMETEK CREATES THE NEXT GENERATION OF DRIVING SIMS WHERE MODIFYING THE CAR MEANS MOUNTING A MISSILE LAUNCHER, NOT CHANGING THE TIRES.

The most common criticism that driving simulators take from the gamers that dislike them is that cruising around a track with other cars is no fun unless you can blow them away. Quarantine simulates driving about as much as a bumper car ride at the local carnival, but it certainly should be more fun than driving in circles.

The character's name is Drake Edgewater, a twenty-first century cab driver with a rebellious attitude. The city he works in, called Kemo, has been quarantined, and he desperately wants to escape. Once you take his modified '52 Checker "Hovercab" around the block for a short spin, you'll see why he wants out.

There is no law, and the guy with the biggest guns is almost always right. Although there are no police, there is enough artillery to make any N.R.A. member wet his pants. Hordes of mutants jump out of windows and heave molotov cocktails at you. Take a turn down the wrong alley and missile launchers mounted in the walls will fire an endless supply of rockets at you. All you want to do is make an honest living, and nothing is going to stand in your way, not even some innocent mutant pedestrian trying to cross the street. Don't waste any precious ammo on them, though. A little blood on the hood is good for your image and for business.

By checking the map of the city, you can locate Passenger Bays or just drive around until someone flags you down. To earn your fare, you'll be given some kind of mission to perform, such as a Gang Kill where you must wipe out the entire group to get paid; a Road Intercept that demands you to hunt down a specific car and destroy it; or a Package Delivery in which a package, like a bomb, must be "delivered" to a certain part of town. If you do it successfully, in addition to the fare you will be given a tip that will somehow advance the plot. When you've acquired enough information, the next level becomes accessible through an underground subway area.

The game starts in the Downtown Core consisting of dark streets filled with a lot of missiles and guns being fired from everywhere. A map gives you the basic layout of the streets and marks the Passenger, Repair and Weapons Bays. The cab is also equipped with a compass and a directional radar that tells how far away the selected destination is. Since you're in a labyrinth of winding city

Quarantine
by Gametek

Game Summary

Play a twenty-first century cab driver that is desperately trying to escape from the quarantined city of Kemo. Your vehicle of destruction is a "slightly" modified '52 Checker taxi cab armed with headlight mounted machine guns. To buy better weapons, pick up fares and deliver them safely to their destination.

Requirements:	286+, 4MB RAM
Sound Support:	Gravis Ultra Sound Sound Blaster and compatibles
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Gametek
Distributed by:	Gametek
Retail Price:	$69.99 CD-ROM or $59.99 Disk
Theme	Driving/Shooting Arcade
Release Date	4th Quarter, '94

streets that often look the same, and since some levels can take up to four minutes in real time to drive across, these tools are indispensible.

There are four more levels, or neighborhoods, to visit, such as the Park, Old Kemo, the Projects and the Wharf, each one as large and hostile as the first. Their uniqueness comes from the variety of background textures, objects and landmarks that make up each one. Be certain that they all have enough offensive drivers to allow any cop to fulfill his quota before the end of the month—if there were any cops.

Finding your way there is only half the battle. There are no defensive drivers in Kemo, and for some reason, it is always open season on cabbies. The Weapons Bay can provide you with the right artillery to combat any pests. With names like Widowmaker, Devastator, Hide n' Shriek, Charbroiler, Punisher and Mr. Mulch, pressing the button of one of these babies should provide you with the right fire power and attitude to survive.

In addition to mounting weapons on your cab, you can also choose from a variety of different armor, add some Nitro boost to zip away from a pursuer or add the ability to jump over them.

All it takes is money, and the only way to earn it is to get passengers that come in all shapes and sizes. If they ask you to perform a mission that you would rather not do, you can swallow your pride and just say no, even though they will insult you.

Over twenty types of enemy vehicles will add variety to your kills, and learning and learning the differences will be critical for your survival. A Tanker, for example, has a bit more armor than a Cycle, so it will take a few more shots to put it away. Understanding the enemy vehicles is just as important as knowing your own

In such an action packed game, there had better be fast graphics and thunderous sounds. Quarantine should have both. The 3D engine is lightening fast and the explosions, with a hefty subwoofer, are enough to bump you right out of your chair. The dark and shadowy scenery creates a sullen mood that brings the city to life in its own violent way. The way the cab handles is interesting enough. Mount six or seven pieces of heavy artillery on it and place it in the most explosive environment possible and it should satisfy any driving simulator critic.

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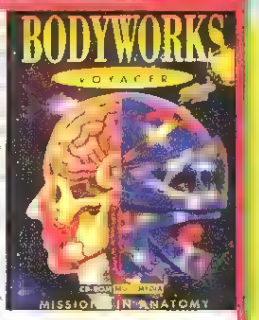

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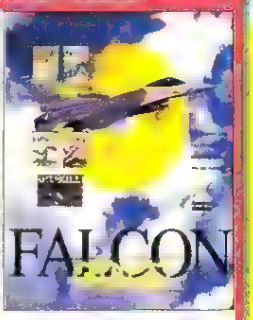

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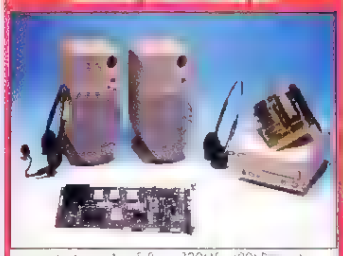

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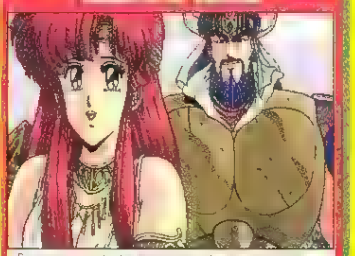

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35331 Phantasmagoria - MAC CD ... 49
35745 Pratest Gold - WINDOWS ... 46
35941 Quarantine - IBM CD ... 40
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34568 Star Trek: TNG - A Final Unity - IBM CD ... 58
23134 Terror at the Deep - DOS ... 35
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29037 7th Guest ... 50
34161 AD&D Genie's Curse ... 40
34165 AD&D Ravenloft: Strahds Possession ... 47
36009 Absolute Zero ... 38
34717 Aces of the Pacific ... 38
34719 Aces over Europe ... 38
330 I Aegis: Guardian of the Fleet ... 49
35365 Air Warrior Super MPC ... 35
35806 Alien Legacy ... 34
32513 Alone in the Dark ... 47
35869 Armored Fist ... 47
36010 Bandits ... 38
36042 Battle Isle 2200 ... 35
32602 Beneath a Steel Sky ... 44
33860 Buzz Aldrin's Space ... 55

35318 Capitol Punishment ... 38
35442 Celebrity Poker MPC ... CALL
35005 Championship Pinball ... 35
35420 ChessMaster 4000 Turbo MPC ... 36
34031 Command Starship ... 41
33909 Companions of Xanth ... 35
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33400 Critical Path ... 45
32715 CyberRace ... 40
35768 Cyberjudas ... 40
36043 Cyclemania ... 35
34973 D-Day: Operation Overlord ... 30
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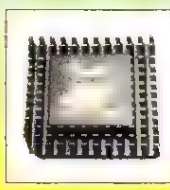

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35315 Front Page Sports: Football 95 ... 45
32784 Gabriel Knight ... 42
33701 Great Naval Battles II ... 40
32120 Great Naval Battles Pack ... 51
34149 Hand of Fate ... 44
33905 Harvester ... 46
35863 Hockey 95 ... 40
34421 Hordes ... 33
31790 Humans ... 26

35346 Incredible Machine 2 ... 38
35350 Incredible Toons ... 38
31351 Indiana Fate of Atlantis ... 39
34759 Inherit the Earth ... 35
31162 Iron Helix ... 58
32128 Journeyman Project ... 45
34347 Jump Raven ... 43
31132 Jutland ... 50
34702 King's Quest Anthology ... 53
30892 King's Quest V ... 42
32904 King's Quest VI Upgrade ... 26
35209 Knights of Xentar ... 40
32591 Labyrinth of Time ... 47
32526 Lands of Lore ... 42
33294 Lawnmower Man ... 39
32792 Leisure Suit Larry VI ... 42
35322 Lode Runner ... 38
31348 Lord of the Rings ... 45

35737 Lost Eden ... 56
31815 Lost in Time ... 19
34349 Lunicus ... 43
33703 MPEG - Dragon's Lair ... 40
34628 MPEG - Horde ... 49
34623 MPEG - Lord of the Rings ... 45
34629 MPEG - Man Enough ... 46
35364 MPEG - Outpost ... CALL
34630 MPEG - Police Quest IV ... 45
35363 MPEG - Psychotron ... CALL
34627 MPEG - Return to Zork ... 46
34624 MPEG - Space Ace ... 46
35773 Maelstrom ... 21
32595 Man Enough ... 45
34559 Maniac Sports ... 30
36008 Master of Magic ... 38
34155 MechWarrior II ... 46
33310 Mega Race ... 37
34865 Metaltech: Earth Siege ... 45

34010 Microsoft Baseball ... 51
31659 Microsoft Golf ... 42
34741 Mig-29 Gold ... 50
33217 Might & Magic: World of Xeen ... 41
34796 Millennium Auction ... 47
34743 More Incredible Machine ... 38
33204 Myst ... 50
35864 No World Order ... 25
34173 Outpost ... 42
349 Pacific Strike & Speech Pack ... 47
32791 Police Quest IV ... 42
35305 Privateer ... 47
35774 Psychotron MPC ... 40
35332 Quest for Glory IV ... 42
34609 Raiden ... 34
32155 Rebel Assault ... 45
34718 Red Baron/A-10 Tank ... 38
35449 Return to RingWorld ... 41
31705 Return to Zork ... 45
11497 SSN-21 Sea Wolf ... 43
32153 Sam & Max Hit the Road ... 39
35943 Saturday Night Live 20th ... 45
34288 Saurus ... CALL
30708 Scrabble Deluxe ... 10
325 Shadow of the Comet ... 38
31479 SimCity Enhanced ... 47
34086 SimEarth ... 52
34866 Space Hulk ... 32
34693 Space Quest Anthology ... 45
34296 Spear of Destiny Super CD-Pak ... 46
34608 Spectre VR ... 42
35724 Star Crusader ... 40
29366 Star Trek 25th Enhanced ... 57
3402 Star Trek Collectibles Guide ... 32
34343 Star Trek DSN: The Hunt ... 41
34350 Star Trek TNG Tech Manual ... 35
32109 Strike Commander/Tactical ... 54
34425 Superhero League of Hoboken ... 35
35872 System Shock ... 47
35018 Terminator: Rampage ... 39
349 Theme Park ... 40
35309 Tony LaRussa Baseball II 2.0 ... 47
30925 Ultima Underworld & ... 29
5416 Ultima VII: Pagan w/ Speech ... 47
35421 Ultimate Domain ... 32
32937 Under a Killing Moon ... 56
36045 Unnecessary Roughness 95 ... 34
32480 Video Cube Space ... 23
35400 Warren Miller's Skiing Safari ... 47
34202 Who Shot Johnny Rock? ... 34
34573 Wild Blue Yonder: Episode One ... 38
35874 Wing Commander Armada ... 47
35405 Wings of Glory: 1917-1918 ... 47
30408 Wolfpack ... 29
33088 World Circuit Grand Prix ... 35
33917 Wrath of the Gods ... 43
35439 Zephyr ... 46

35543 ACS-100.1 Speaker Pair ... 103
28122 ACS-300 Speakers w/Subwoofer ... 240
30475 AR Partner 5.0 Speaker System ... 253
27392 Koss HD-1 Speakers ... 24
27950 Koss HD-4 Speakers ... 39
30730 Koss HD-6 MPC Speakers ... 63
32228 Labtec CS-1000 Speakers ... 74
27905 Labtec CS-700 Speakers ... 29
31689 Labtec CS-800 Speakers ... 32
32220 Labtec CS-900 Speakers ... 62

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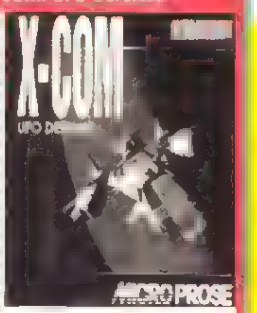

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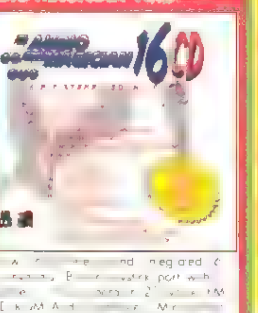

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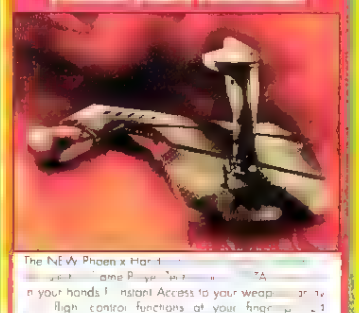

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31809 OmniCD Upgrade Kit Internal	221
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34946 Pro Deluxe Multimedia Kit	735
34133 Realmagic CD-ROM Kit	706
33859 Reno CD-ROM Portable Player	294
27924 Sensory Starter Upgrade Kit	366
34225 Sensory System I INT Multimed a Kit	440
34950 Super Deluxe Multimedia Kit	4 7

JOYSTICKS

33226 Flight Stand	7
16439 Flight Stick	36
31417 Flight Stick Pro	57
27914 Flightstick PRO MAC	72
31148 G-Force Flight Yoke	53
32333 Game Zapper	76
24018 GameCard III MCA Automatic	41
33855 Gameport 2000 Up to 80MHz	26
33292 Genovation Parallel Game Port	31
29404 Gravis Analog Pro Joystick	33
28366 Gravis Eliminator Card	23
35572 Gravis Flight Pack Pro	56
27815 Gravis Gamepad IBM	2
32174 Gravis Gamepad MAC ..	30
30003 Gravis MouseStick II MAC	43
35458 PC Golf System	42
30825 Thrustmaster ACM Game Card	26
35104 Thrustmaster F-16 FLCS	CALL
26850 Thrustmaster Flight Contro	59
33344 Thrustmaster Formula T1	11
29522 Thrustmaster Pro Flight Contro	10
29863 Thrustmaster Rudder Pedals	10
33780 Thrustmaster Weapon Mark I MAC	6
31258 Thrustmaster Weapon Mark II	90
29434 Virtus Pilot Yoke	64
33052 Y-Cable for 2 Joysticks	9

[illegible]

33027 Aladdin - SEGA	47
33547 Art of Fighting - SNES	58
33606 Cliffhanger SEGA	53
25550 Dragon's Lair 3DO	49
32543 Dungeon Master SNES	64
33073 Escape from Monster Manor - 3DO	50
33561 Eternal Champions SEGA	60
34004 Hardball II SNES	56
25850 Horde 3DO	52
35352 Incredible Toons - SEGA CD	42
33823 John Madden NFL 94 3DO	51
32535 Jungle Strike SEGA	43
32534 Jurassic Park SEGA	43
34598 Kombat Cars SEGA	36
35036 Leathal Enforcers SEGA CD	CALL
33074 Lemmings - 3DO	51
33832 MLBPA Baseball SNES	51
33025 Mad Dog McCree 3DO	51
33026 Mortal Kombat SEGA	59
35034 Mortal Kombat SEGA CD ..	44
32574 Mortal Kombat SNES ..	61
31971 NBA Jam SEGA	55
35062 NBA Jam SNES	55
33828 NBA Showdown 94 SEGA	50
32051 NHL 94 SEGA	46
33829 Normy's Beach SEGA	30
33070 Oceans Below 3DO	43
26132 Out of this World 3DO	51
21531 Pele's - SEGA	49
34003 Pele's Soccer - SNES ..	53
35397 Road Rash 3DO	43
34667 Shadowrun SEGA ..	50
33851 Sonic the Hedgehog 3 - SEGA ..	58
33077 Space Shuttle 3DO	43
25909 Star Control II 3DO	52
35096 Star Trek TNG Echoes SEGA ..	50
31046 Star Trek TNG Future's Past SNES	61
32578 Street Fighter II SEGA	63
32541 Street Fighter II SNES	62
33546 Super NBA Basketball SEGA ..	58
32576 Super Off Road Baja SNES	53
35521 Super Street Fighter II SEGA	64
35520 Super Street Fighter II SNES	64
33734 Super Wing Commander 3DO ..	50
35037 Tomcat Alley SEGA CD ..	51
35093 Virtua Racing SEGA	58
33237 Virtua Pinball SEGA	CALL
32540 X-Men SEGA	44

30958 AudioMan	135
35760 Aztech SoundGalaxy Nova16 ..	97
35761 Aztech SoundGalaxy Nova16Extra	113
34224 Digital Sound Pro 16	112
31615 Digital Sound Pro 16 Plus	167
28247 Gravis UltraSound	122
26292 Gravis UltraSound Max	182
27926 Jazz Soundcard SCSI	139
31059 Port-Able Sound Plus	107
35056 Premium 3-D Multi-CD	145
35055 Premium 3-D SCSI2	145
35054 Pro 3-D SCSI2 w/ Wavetable	270
32059 Pro Audio 16 Basic	97
30563 Pro Audio Studio 16	127
27503 Pro AudioSpectrum 16	126
34615 ReelMagic Lite	293
32031 Roland RAP10 Audio Producer ..	247
35480 Roland SCD-10 DB Sound Canvas	157
35628 Roland SCD-15 DB Sound Canvas	208
32533 Sound Blaster 16 MCD ASP ..	178
32531 Sound Blaster 16 SCSI-2	147
4807 Sound Blaster 16 Value Edition ..	107
21735 Sound Blaster AWE32 ..	284
34661 Sound Blaster Pro Value Ed ..	83
30090 SoundMan 16	106
33751 SoundMan Wave	188

36132 Kingston 1MB Simms	CALL
36133 Kingston 2MB Simms	CALL
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36123 AMT 486DX-33 /15A, 2VLB	588
36122 AMT 486DX 50 /.5A 2VLB	653
31720 AMT 486DX2-66 5ISA 2VLB	641
36124 AMT 486SX-33 /15A 2V.B	428
36115 Micronics 486DX 33 6ISA 2VL	534
36109 Micronics 486DX 33 EISA	637
36120 Micronics 486DX2 50 VLB	581
36108 Micronics 486DX2-66 6ISA, 2VLB	580
36119 Micronics 486DX2-66 VLB	608
36116 Micronics 486SX-25 5A	245
36118 Micronics 486SX-25 VLB	291
36117 Micronics PENT-60 5E 5A 2PCI	984

31841 Cyrix 83D87-25 FasMathDX Copr	62
31842 Cyrix 83D87-33 FasMathDX Copr	57
31884 Cyrix 83D87-40 FasMathDX Copr	62
31885 Cyrix 83S87-25 FasMathSX Copr	51
33455 Cyrix 83S87-33 SX CoProcessor	64
31739 Cyrix CX486DRX2 16/32 386DX-16	256
33620 Cyrix CX486DRX2-25/50 386DX25	291
31738 Cyrix CX486DRX2 33/66 386DX-33	342
31836 Cyrix CX486SRX2 20/40 386SX-20	221
34409 Cyrix CX486SRX2 25/50 386SX-25	249
24196 Math Co-Processor 387DX	86
35501 Math Co-Processor 387S.	80
24200 Math Co-Processor 387SX	80
35134 Overdrive 486DX-50 CPU	245
30884 Overdrive 486DX-50 CPU WO/OD	245
31505 Overdrive 486DX-66 CPU WO/OD	291
35502 Overdrive 486DX-66 FOR SX/DX33	291
35599 Overdrive 486SX2-50 CPU WO/FPU	96

33753 Dream Girl	29
34001 Girlfriend Lisa (PG-13)	37
34436 Girlfriend Teri	5
33227 Penthouse Interactive BM CD	78
35086 Penthouse Interactive MAC CD	78
32891 Playboy Electronic DateBook	35
32290 Strip Poker Pro #01 Data Disk BM	17
32291 Strip Poker Pro #02 Data Disk IBM	17
32292 Strip Poker Pro #03 Data Disk BM	17
32293 Strip Poker Pro #04 Data Disk IBM	17
32294 Strip Poker Pro #05 Data Disk BM	17
32295 Strip Poker Pro #06 Data Disk IBM	17
25457 Strip Poker Pro #07 Data Disk IBM	8
25458 Strip Poker Pro #08 Data Disk IBM	18
35211 Strip Poker Pro #09 Data Disk IBM	18
35212 Strip Poker Pro #10 Data Disk IBM	18
35613 Strip Poker Pro #11 Data Disk IBM	18
35614 Strip Poker Pro #12 Data Disk IBM	18
31886 Strip Poker Professional IBM	29
31887 Strip Poker Professional MAC ..	30

31400 Access 2.0 WINDOWS	325
34083 Bookshelf MPC CD '94	65
31166 Corel Draw MPC CD 4.0	264
34905 Corel Draw MPC CD 5.0	452
33020 Encarta MPC CD Encyclopedia '94 ..	92
33032 Excel 5.0 WINDOWS	304
35281 MS-DOS Upgrade 6.22 ..	53
34114 PowerPoint 4.0 WINDOWS	312
36050 Procomm Plus 2.0 WINDOWS	111
31527 Publisher 2.0 WINDOWS	87
31244 QEMM 386.7.01	63
32273 Quattro Pro 5.0 - WINDOWS	45
32346 Quicken 3.0 WINDOWS	44
31000 Shoebox Image Manager IBM CD ..	97
29582 Stacker 4.0 WINDOWS ..	95
30775 Visio 2.0	122
21493 WinFax Pro 4.0 WINDOWS	82
34080 Windows 3.11	93
34081 Windows Upgrade 3.11	51
32211 WordPerfect 6.0 WINDOWS	303
33021 Works 3.0 WINDOWS	88

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LIKE SCHWARZKOPF, IF I COULD BE LIKE...

TAKE COMMAND OF THE FULL RANGE OF AMERICAN NAVAL FORCES IN THE PERSIAN GULF AND INDIAN OCEAN AGAINST THE BIG, BAD RUSSIAN BEAR.

In the Cold War, it was the Soviet Union that the U.S. had to fight to keep their grandiose plans at bay. In the Gulf War, the enemy was Saddam Hussein and the Iraqi forces. Since then, it has been hard for America to find a nemesis.

It's 1999, and the Bear is back. You take command of the American forces in the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean. Your purpose is to keep the vital sea lanes open and prevent the ultra-nationalist Russians from establishing client states in the region.

The importance of the mission has granted you the entire spectrum of naval power-ships, submarines, and aircraft, including Nimitz-class carriers, Seawolf attack submarines, F-14D Tomcats, and F117A stealth fighters.

5th Fleet is based on the boardgame by the same name from Victory Game. Now you can let the computer keep the records and you can concentrate your efforts on strategy and command.

Hi-res VGA graphics make radar screens more realistic.

Some features are head to head play that allow two players to compete on the same machine in a turned-based game. Or play by E-Mail by registering your moves to expand your circle of opponents on all major network systems, including the Internet.

5th Fleet
by Avalon Hill

Game Summary

A completely redesigned and updated version of the board game by the same name. You are in command of the forces in the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean, and must keep the vital sea lanes open and prevent the Russians from establishing themselves in the region.

Requirements:	386sx+, 2MB RAM VGA, Mouse
Sound Support:	Sound Blaster and compatibles
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Avalon Hill
Distributed by:	Stanley Associates
Retail Price:	$69.95
Theme	Naval Warfare
Release Date	4th Quarter, 94

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THE MONSTERS ARE COMING! TO ARMS!

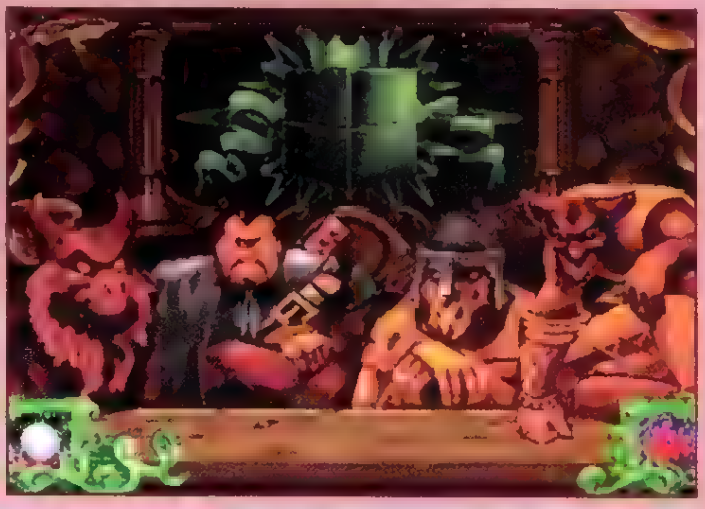
PLAY THE OVERLORD AND DEFEND YOUR DOMINION AGAINST INVASIONS BY A MULTITUDE OF ENEMY CLANS IN DOMINUS FROM U.S. GOLD.

In many fantasy strategy war games the player is required to act as aggressor, sending out forces to conquer the enemy. In Dominus, originally created by ASCIIware some time ago, the role is switched. The player acts as the overlord of his domain, and enemy clans are invading the land.

As overlord, you must send out your troops, consisting of thirty different types of monsters of all shapes and sizes. If your initial supply begins to diminish, you can visit the kennel and combine different species to create new ones. Captured enemies can be taken to the interrogation room to be questioned nicely among whips and chains and other instruments of persuasion. If they survive, send them off to the kennel to become part of your own army and breeding stock.

Being the powerful overlord that you are, you also have magic on your side. Create over seventy different kinds of spells and then visit the battlefield to do the honors yourself. Choose a Fireball and click on the poor souls that you want to attack. Then watch as the flames come shooting down from the sky burning them all to a crisp. In a more humane gesture, the Earthquake will rattle their bones instead of frying them (well, humane for a Warlord anyway).

Design traps by combining a variety of triggers with hazards and place them anywhere. Four War Room Commanders will help you carry out different tasks.



Dominus
by U.S. Gold

Game Summary

Play the role of an overlord trying to defend his dominion against the invasions of enemy clans. Create and cast spells, design and place traps and keep a close eye on your resources while you do battle in different parts of your realm. Try diplomacy or spy on the enemy to gain a well-needed edge.

Requirements:	256 VGA, 640k RAM CD-ROM drive optional
Sound Support:	AdLib, Roland, Sound Blaster and compatibles
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	U.S. Gold
Distributed by:	U.S. Gold
Retail Price:	$54.95
Theme	Fantasy Strategy War Simulator
Release Date	4th Quarter, 94

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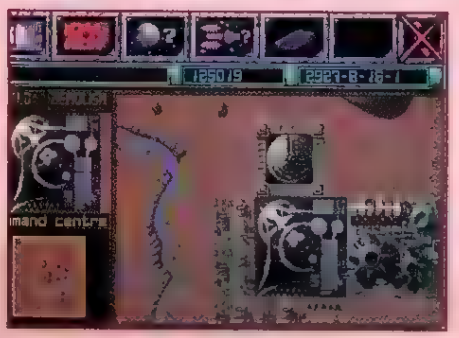
ALL ROADS LEAD TO ROME EVENTUALLY

FORCED TO LEAVE OLD EARTH BECAUSE OF GLOBAL STRIFE AND DESTRUCTION, YOU ARE THE PRESIDENT OF THE NEW EARTH COLONY. IT IS TIME TO REUNITE.

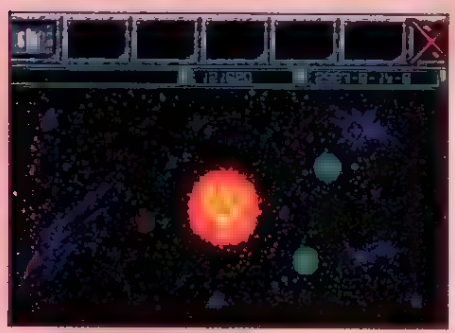


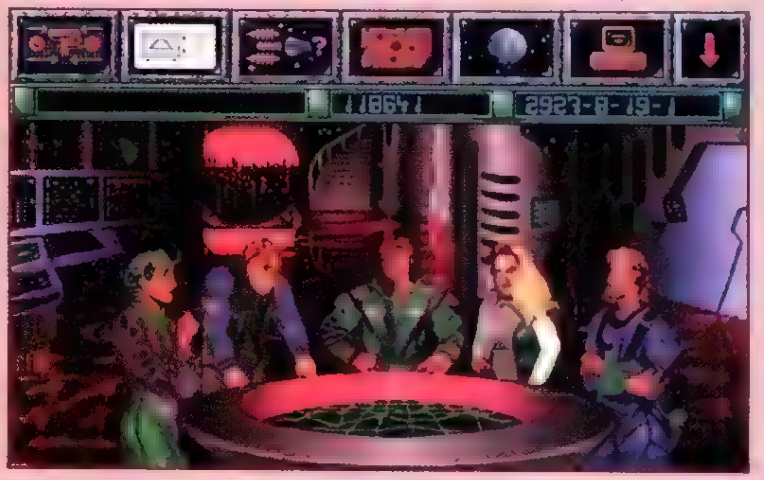
In the late 20th Century, human progress began to cause irreversible damage to Earth's resources and political climate. The U.N. devoted all its efforts to saving the planet after the collapse of the Biosphere. The removal of self-determination angered the populace, and major acts of civil unrest appeared in member nations. Eventually, two fully equipped research ships left Earth to find planets suitable for colonization. One never returned. The other, with you as leader, was able to find a home in a distant solar system. You have been successful and it is time to reunite with Mother Earth.

To help you with your job, hire advisors at different costs and with different abilities. There are advisors for Construction, Development, Fighting Forces and more. It is your job though, not your advisors', to make the final decision for what technology to design and buying products for the researchers.

On the way to Old Earth you must colonize other planets and search for new ones. Fight against enemy colonies who will not do things your way. The trip will be a long one, so you'll need all of the resources that you can get your hands on.

The ultimate task of rejoining the human race is in your hands. If you make the right decisions and command your forces wisely, the year 3000 should be a major milestone in human history.





Reunion

by Merit Software

Game Summary

New Earth has become a thriving, self sufficient community and you, as its President, are preparing to return to Old Earth. You know nothing of the conditions there after being forced to flee from the anarchy and chaos that you left behind. The next step for the human race to take will be heavily based on your decisions.

Requirements:	386, 4MB extended and 512K expanded RAM, VGA
Sound Support:	Gravis Ultrasound Sound Blaster and compatibles
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Grandslam Video
Distributed by:	Merit Software
Retail Price:	$59.95
Theme	Strategy
Release Date	3rd Quarter, 94

USE YOUR HARLEY TO HOG THE RACE AND WIN IT ALL!

RIDE A SOUPED-UP MOTORCYCLE AT SPEEDS OF 80, 90, 100, 150 MPH OR MORE AND NEVER LEAVE YOUR LIVING ROOM IN ACCOLADE'S NEW CYCLEMANIA!

If you ever wished to be a big-time motorcycle racer, Cycle Mania maybe the closest you'll ever get! Accolade says this simulation actually incorporates some 400 megabytes of digitized roads and scenery. Cyclemania also has cutaway video clips. So, if you should happen to wipe out, a quick video clip pops up onto the screen and shows a real cyclist eating asphalt or hay bales.

You have a choice of six motorcycles to ride. Each bike has a pop-up screen which has that cycle's particular statistics. Each bike has different strengths and weaknesses. You can setup your bike in a number of different ways. The more sophisticated the upgrade, the more it costs you. As you progress and win money, you will in turn use that money to upgrade your bikes. To purchase the bike setups you'll be treated to one of the game's several animated sequences. This sequence takes you into a motorcycle shop where the clerk offers you different upgrades.

Once the cycle is setup, choose one of five "treacherous" roads. Indeed, you race on roads, not on tracks. Real roads have been digitized along with scenery. According to producer Pete Pavich, Cyclemania uses new video compression techniques and special road mapping algorithms to re-create as realistic a road race as possible. The new compression techniques create the sensations of acceleration and braking. The road mapping uses real video footage overlayed with graphics to produce seamless scrolling.

Next you have the options of choosing the difficulty level. From here you have a chance to test out your bike and do a practice run. When you get to know you cycle and the road better, it will be time to try the qualifying run. Your fastest time determines your position in the starting grid. In the race you compete against five computer controlled racers.

Once on the road and racing, you'll discover that there are obstacles such as oil slicks, slow moving trucks and cars. You're allowed a few crashes, but if you wreck too often, you'll be scooped up by an ambulance and whisked away. You can control the motorcycle either by keyboard or joystick from a unique perspective. Other commands are single keyboard strokes.

Cyclemania uses a behind-the-cycle perspective and real road digitized footage. You even have an option to stiff leg an opponent, causing him to crash and earning you bonus points! Just choose the "aggressive" option before you race and you'll be off and kicking!

Cyclemania
by Accolade

Game Summary

Accolade believes this is the motorcycle racing sim to beat all others. They put a camera on a car and videotaped real roads which they digitized into the game using new in-house software and techniques. You chose a bike from a list of six, win races, earn money, upgrade your bike and win more races, respect and fame.

Requirements:	386/25 mhz, DOS 5.0, SVGA, 4MB RAM, CD-ROM
Sound Support:	Most major MPC sound cards
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Accolade
Distributed by:	Accolade
Retail Price:	$59.95
Theme	Racing simulations
Release Date	Fall '94

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CAN'T THE HUMANS AND THE ORCS EVER GET ALONG?

WARCRAFT: ORCS AND HUMANS PITS THESE TWO RACES AGAINST EACH OTHER IN A MEDIEVAL FANTASY/STRATEGY GAME OF MAGIC AND TACTICAL WARFARE.

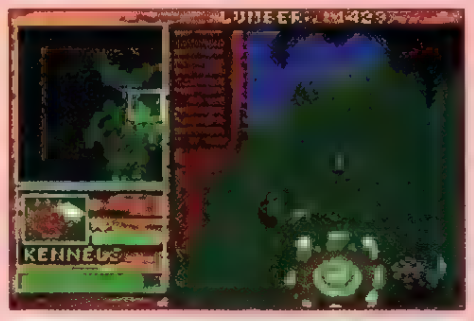
In this medieval fantasy world there are Humans and Orcs that don't get along, but when have they ever? Now you can take sides in this age-old battle and lead one side or the other to victory over the other race

To do this, you must must successfully construct strongholds, manage the economy, explore the surrounding land and engage in tactical warfare. Find patches of trees and assign peasants to harvest the lumber or search for a gold mine to provide the wealth you will need to finance your cause. When you begin to accumulate resources, buildings can be built, including barracks to train soldiers for your army Constructing farms will feed your clan, and temples and wizard towers will add magic into your arsenal. You can begin training wizards and shaman and help them learn new spells. You never know when the enemy will attack so you have to be prepared.

After training grunts and building catapults, you can protect the perimeter of your domain from invasion. For your forces to attack, you must tell them to do so. Keep a close eye on the overhead map to watch for enemy units. At the same time, recruit and train soldiers, magic men and peasants. When things are settled, resources plentiful and everything peaceful, you can send scouts out to explore the surrounding area and try to find the enemy. When you do, you can plot an all-out assault, or send small attacks, trying to kill off the foe from the inside by making them spend all their time and effort into keeping their buildings from major disrepair.

If you choose to command the humans, you'll play as Galadin, an aspiring lieutenant in King Llane's human armies. If you choose to play from the Orc's perspective, you'll lead the troops as Rotwort, the most ferocious member of Blackland's dark legion.

Warcraft also allows the player to approach the game as either having a continuous story line, or as a number of separate, free-form scenarios. In the integrated story line, you must be victorious in thirteen consecutive scenarios to win the game. In free-form play, you can choose from twenty individual scenarios and play them in any order you want.



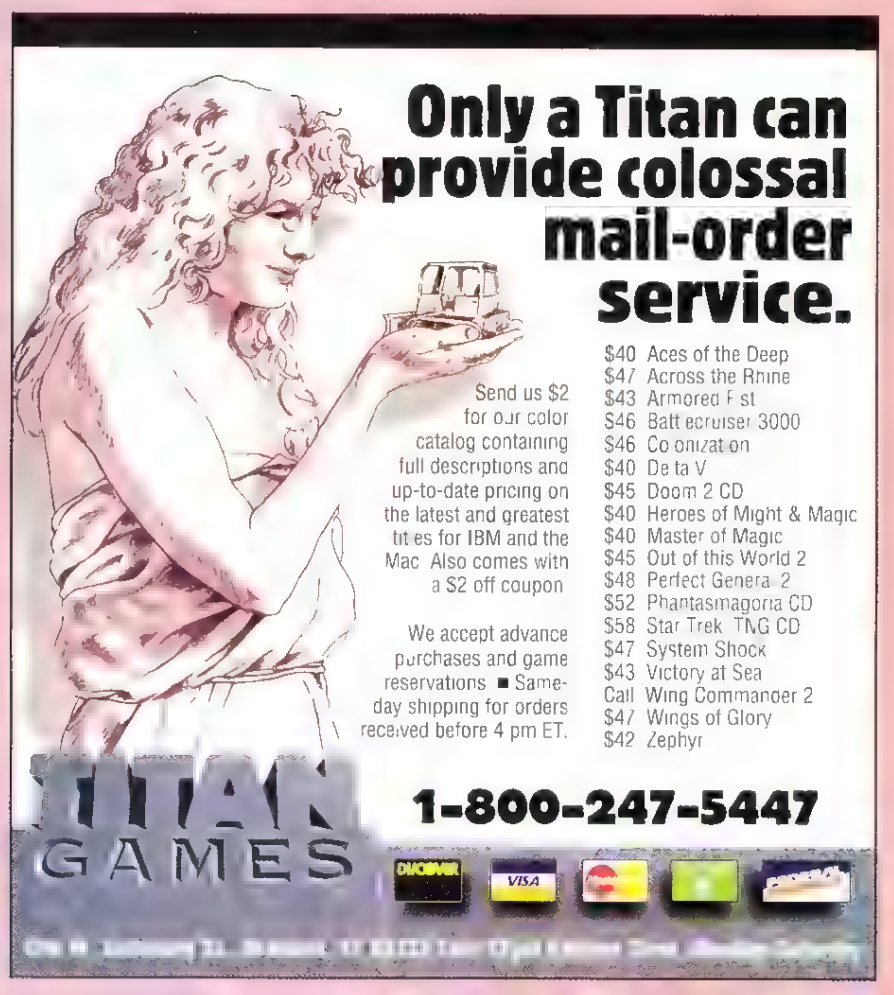
Warcraft: Orcs and Humans

by Blizzard

Game Summary

Command Human or Orc forces in a real time, strategic contest of medieval economic and tactical warfare. Build strongholds, manage resources and construct machines of destruction and then locate and annihilate the enemy. One or two players can compete via network or modem play. Kill orcs or slaughter humans.

Requirements:	386DX/16 or better, VGA 4MB RAM, Mouse
Sound Support:	All major sound cards
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Blizzard
Distributed by:	Davidson
Retail Price:	$59.95
Theme	Fantasy Strategy
Release Date	4th Quarter, '94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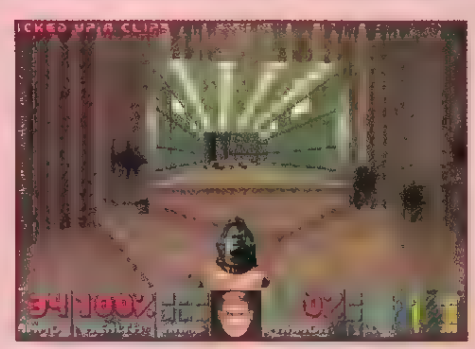
THE FORCES OF HELL ARE BACK FOR ANOTHER ROUND!

NEW WEAPONS AND NEW ENEMIES SHOW UP FOR MORE OF THAT SAME OLD SHOOTING GALLERY FUN AS ID SOFTWARE PREPARES FOR THE UPCOMING DOOM'S DAY.



Battling rush hour traffic on a daily basis can be bad enough. Imagine having to stop the forces of Hell not once, but twice in one lifetime. In the first Doom, our hero found himself alone on an alien planet with nothing more than a small arsenal of weapons and his instinct to survive. Cunning skill and careful strategy got him through the toughest of situations.

For the player, it meant a heart-pounding, nerve-racking romp through a funhouse of evil. Dark corridors echoed with the grunts and growls of frightening creatures filled with rage and thirsty for the warm blood their flaring nostrils picked out of the noxious air. Ex-marines armed with pistols and shotguns, once close companions, were transformed into hideous forms of rage with nothing to do but wait for you to turn a corner. They wanted nothing more than to fill your belly with buckshot and watch you writhe in agony.

Sometimes, no matter how careful you were, a trap would spring and you would be surrounded by a demon ambush. Before you could fire a single shot, hell hounds were taking chunks of flesh out of your hide, fireballs shot at you from every direction out of the palms of a seemingly infinite number of apekids (the impish fellas from primate ancestry). Sometimes there is nothing else to do but restore from a previously saved position.

Wolfenstein hinted at evil; Doom threw it in your face. The 3D rendered graphics combined with dizzying shadowing and lighting techniques gave Doom a mood that few others could even touch. Add in multi-leveled rooms with stairs, ramps and platforms and the player got the impression of running through a paint-ball game, except it wasn't your buddies or your co-workers you were shooting at.

The first episode of Doom, the shareware installment, could not prepare you for what would later turn up in the last two. Corpses dangled from the ceilings, twitching bodies were skewered by stakes planted in the ground, walls made of flesh screamed when struck. Did Doom prepare you for Doom II? We'll soon find out.

The evil is back, and now it's closer to home. Hell has surfaced on Earth, evidenced by the paranormal sites visible outside the abandoned buildings. The cities are in flames and it's not the fault of Mrs. O'Leary's cow tipping over a lamp this time. These flames will take a lot more than a water hose to put out. You play the last surviving human that can put

Doom II

by Id Software

Game Summary

The demon monsters are back but this time they have hit closer to home. As the last human that can save mankind, you must fight your way through a number of different levels to reach the end and put a stop to the powerful force behind it all to save the world. All new weapons will help you battle the new roster of monsters.

Requirements:	386+, VGA, 4MB RAM
Sound Support:	Most major sound cards
Available for:	PC and compatibles
Designed by:	Id Software
Distributed by:	GT Interactive Software
Retail Price:	$59.95
Theme	Action Arcade
Release Date	4th Quarter, '94

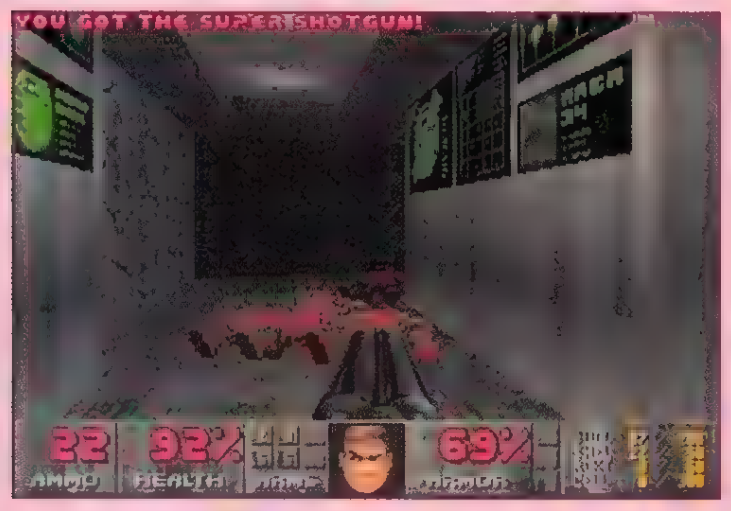
a stop to the destruction and the end of mankind.

But first you will have to brave your way through a multitude of levels and different buildings to get to the end. What stands in your way? All of the old creatures you came to hate as well as an entirely new crop of beasts. These new guys make the old enemies look like the Brady Bunch. You only had two kinds of soldiers to contend with in Doom. Now there is an Arnold-looking guy with a chain gun, and he's not shy about holding down the trigger. Sure, that means you won't have to find a chain gun for yourself in some secret room but you'll still have to dodge the shots.

There are scheduled to be more demons to fill the larger number of levels. In fact, there are supposed to be twice as many nasties to fight, so hone up those strafing skills. The twisted minds at id have developed nasties like the Pain Elemental, who shoots flaming skulls (also known as Lost Souls). Once dead, three skulls rise from the corpse. The roster for Doom was enough to keep you on the edge of your chair. The next one might knock you off of your seat.

You won't be left alone. A larger arsenal of deadly weapons will be available for you to blaze your own path of destruction. There's a super shotgun, really just a double-barreled version of the old one, but it does some serious damage. It is accessed from the same button as the regular shotgun and it uses the same ammo, except it takes two shells instead of one. Presumably, since the same six buttons appear on the status bar, there might be two weapons for each. But then, who knows if the status bar along the bottom will go unchanged?

Likewise, some of your friends can join you in the fray. Like Doom, Doom II will support modem play for two people to do battle against each other or join their forces, making the demons wish they had never left their fiery home. Even worse for them will be the LAN support over an IPX protocol, that allows up to four people to enter the virtual world at one time. All four can go head-to-head, turning many of the monsters into spectators.



To take care of the quickly growing numbers of CD-ROM users, Doom II will be available in both CD and floppy versions. There should also be a Doom II Survival Guide to help you through to the end.

How soon can gamers expect to find Doom II on the shelves? As soon as October. The release date, as you may already know is being called Doom's Day. A number of promotional events are scheduled like a national tournament and poster and T-shirt giveaways.

The scheduled release date should be before Christmas. What better stocking stuffer for Daddy or Mommy or even little Jimmy or Janey?. What better present could you find under the old tree then your brand new copy of the game that gave meaning to the word violence? Sure it's not quite with the Christmas spirit, but then who dictates what that is? TV commercials?

The differences in Doom II are many. For one thing, there appears to be different lay-outs for the rooms, with a variety of ways to test your agility. Instead of starting off at an easy pace, expect the first episode to throw you right into the battle. The brains at id Software are holding back a lot of the real surprises until Doom's Day itself. Expect there to be more than simply new enemies and new weapons. Expect Doom II to redefine action games for the PC!

Advertisers' Index

Access Entertainment	70, 71
Accolade	61
Avalon Hill	11
Capstone	78, 79, 88
CH Products	111
Chips and Bits	121
Computer Express	82, 83
Creative Labs	IFC
Davidson	50, 51
Domark	OBC
Dynamix	7
Eidolon	45
Electronic Arts	55
GT Interactive	31
Hi Tech Entertainment	57, 59
ImagiNation Network	47, 75, Disk
Impressions	13, 15
Interplay	53, 93
Logitech	34, 35
Looking Glass	85, 87, 89
Merit Software	29, 91, 97
MicroLeague	9, 27
MicroProse	69
New World Computing	17, 25, 101
NovaLogic	3
Papyrus	19
Paramount Interactive	49
Philips Interactive Media	22, 23
Realistic Automation	63
Quantum Quality	77, 107, 117
Quick Shot Technologies	37
Sanctuary Woods	72, 73
Sierra On-Line	41, 86
Software Sorcery	5
Starplay Productions	103
Strategic Simulations	67, 113, 125
Take 2 Interactive	39, 65
Thunderseat Technologies	16
Time Warner Interactive	IBC
Titan Games	92
Trimark Interactive	43

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BUILDING A DREAM, BYTE BY BYTE

PART II

by KEVIN PERRY

The old maxim is 'Lead, follow or get out of the way.' But is it applicable when a side road has been discovered? Software companies by the dozens are either looking to Hollywood for inspiration or actually contracting with them to design the 'next generation' of games. Witness the proliferation of well-known actors and actresses making the transition from celluloid to silicon, both in voice and in image. Note the subtle change in game companies' personnel rosters and credit screens, as programmers and artists give way to directors and producers. Silicon Valley is moving south as a body, heading for the hills of Hollywood.

The rewards they hope to reap are certainly worth hoping for. Computer games are a miniscule crumb of the entertainment money pie. Movies are where the money and attention are lavished, because they generate so much of the same. Thousands might await the release of a computer game if all the factors are right, while millions of people pay to see the most mediocre of movies. The infusion of talent, vision and revenue from the motion picture industry is seen as necessary and beneficial by many.

But not by all. Movies have the flash and sizzle that attract modern audiences, but lack the critical element of interactivity that makes or breaks a computer game. After all, watching a movie is a passive experience; a computer game should be an active one. Of course, no one is trying to map the movie industry onto the computer industry. The companies that are seeking Hollywood input are not abandoning their previous savvy and skill at creating good games. Yet some companies have decided that Hollywood is the wrong paradigm for the needed boost in computer gaming, and are looking elsewhere for inspiration.

the CyberJudas Project

This is the second article in a series exploring the myriad paths that lie between an idea and the computer game it can become. How do storyboards and line drawings become a game? In order to illustrate the way one company is answering these questions, D.C. True has allowed us to show the evolution of their own ideas about their current project, from an airline napkin to CyberJudas-the sequel to Shadow President. See the September issue of CD-ROM Entertainment for a more thorough look at the company and an overview of the CyberJudas project.

Project Manager (and designer and graphic artist and studio manager, etc.) Charlie Athanas knew that he wanted the CyberJudas project to reach beyond the current standards of gaming. That's a necessary goal in an industry where state of the art has a two-month expiration date. Graphically, he's using Wavefront technology and Silicon Graphics machines to measure up to and hopefully exceed the rest of the industry. President Robin Antonick doesn't have to worry much about pushing the envelope in terms of artificial intelligence, since his previous work has been far ahead of the pack; still, there are rough edges to polish and new heights to reach. Each of these portions of the design and development will receive its own article in the months to follow.

But when Athanas chose to push other factors of the design in a new direction, he didn't look to Hollywood like many in the industry. He

looked much closer to the Evanston, IL offices of D.C. True, to the wide world of Chicago theater.

Chicago theater

Chicago is a big theater town. Last year alone, 167 theaters opened a new show in the Chicagoland area. This doesn't count the dozens and dozens which were between shows or recycling old ones. Many of these theaters like the Goodman and Steppenwolf have become nationally recognized in recent years. These hundreds of theaters support a few thousand actors, directors and technical people, as well as several thousand more hopefuls. Northwestern University, also in Evanston, boasts one of the nation's strongest theater departments, thus adding hundreds more aspiring talents to the mix every year.

The advantages of this are obvious. Live actors and voice talent are nigh necessary elements in game design today Instead of working with Hollywood names, D.C. True can hire local talent and work more closely with them to produce the effects they want. While CyberJudas most likely won't feature actual digitized actors, their voices and skills are very necessary to bringing the rendered characters to life. The talent

market in Chicago is in a glut, and that helps to drive development costs down as well

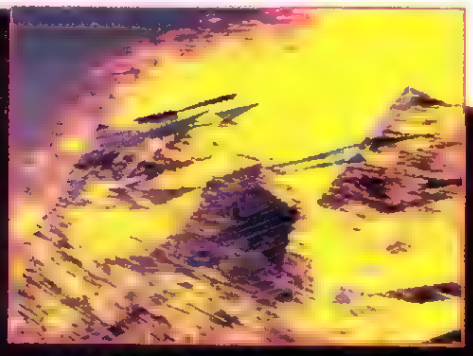
That cost factor is a big one for small companies like D.C. True. Indeed, Athanas believes that the recent SAG/AFTRA agreements on scale pay for acting in multimedia products will have only one affect: it'll keep name talent out of gaming. Other companies have mentioned the sudden escalating costs (tripled or quintupled in some budgets), and indicated their distress. Of course, well-known stars (and even second-tier talent) would never consent to working for scale unless they had a personal interest in the project. It seems now even mediocre talent is out of the price range of many projects. This is not to say that the union rulings are unfair or undeserved; that's a philosophical can of worms out of the scope of this article. The fact of the matter is, though, that because of the costs D.C. True has sought other avenues. For much of the visible talent (meaning voice work) in the game, non-equity actors are being hired to keep costs down. The agreements have less effect on design work, however; and it's in this arena that D.C. True has chosen to reap the benefits of the talent in the area.

But Team True's involvement in the area goes beyond acting talent. Creative input in various areas will also come from the theater world. Athanas believes that the gaming industry has plenty to learn from theater talent. After all, theater creativity must take into account the audience as well. Every night that a play is run, it runs differently whether for good or ill. A movie, on the other hand, is always the same. Theater must plan around dropped cues, snarled lines and various environmental factors. This required flexibility, therefore, may give an added insight into the special needs of computer games.

Sound ideas

Rather than use the increasingly popular sound and music libraries available, D.C. True decided that CyberJudas would have a unique soundtrack. In order to produce this, Team True turned to Chicago theater sound veterans Michael Bodeen and Rob Milburn (with help from audio engineer and game expert David Naunton).

A revolution has been slowly sweeping through the Chicago theater world (and other theater markets as well) in which sound design has assumed increasing importance. With the advent of sophisticated and affordable synthesizers and computer control boards, many directors and producers are turning to their



sound staff for more than just background noises and music. As any computer gamer knows, the soundtrack of a game is directly or indirectly responsible for most aspects of the mood and atmosphere generated during play.

While this is Bodeen and Milburn's first foray into the world of computer gaming, the concepts they are working with are very familiar ones. Their task is to provide atmosphere for distinct sections of the game, drawing the player into the tension by degrees. The taunts of the CyberJudas should provoke a different reaction than the calm advice of the Chief of Staff. Sound for specific situations to create a mood is very definitely a familiar order for theater sound design.

This seems very simple on the surface. For example, when the player moves to a country mired in poverty, the soundtrack will shift to the empty whistling of the wind and crying children, etc. Other countries will also create or maintain a specific flavor through the soundtrack. None of this is revolutionary or terribly difficult. Where the going gets tough is the realization that CyberJudas is far from a static simulation.

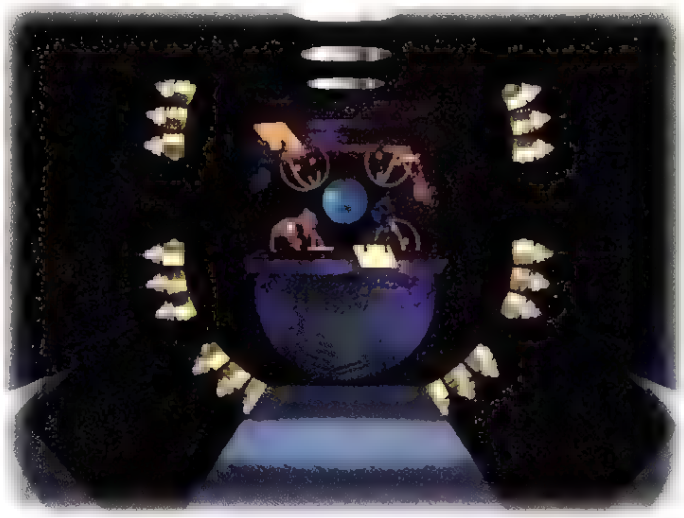
As the game progresses, the interface and the world will respond to every action. Advisors who feel they are being ignored grow more frustrated and angry; country's fortunes will shift up and down with other factors in the simulation. All of these changes will be reflected somewhere in the mood and atmosphere, and all have to be accounted for without strict planning because there is no way to predict player actions. The tall order is therefore to create sound that is both dynamic and interactive.

The CD-ROM basis of the game will leave many technical questions behind, like FM emulation problems that have current programmers screaming in frustration. But that hardly means that the planning doesn't take technology into account. When sound design is done for a theater, Milburn and Bodeen know what it's going to sound like. But with a myriad of home systems out there, who knows how any given player will be hearing their work? The answer is to plan for the least common denominator. If it doesn't sound right on the base level, tiny speakers, they won't leave it in. That isn't to say that the users with tremendous home systems won't be in for a treat; just that the less sophisticated systems won't be as handicapped as they might think when Bodeen and Milburn have completed bringing theater experience to the soundtrack of the game.

The Character of Dialogue

Another part of the essential atmosphere in CyberJudas is the intricate characterization of the advisors. After all, the most dramatic scenes in the game will be discovering which advisor is the CyberJudas. Since each game will feature a different traitor, all advisors must have obvious and unobvious motivations and closet skeletons in order to believably fill the role. These traitorous activities and inclinations will be uncovered partially from conversations with the advisors; so the characters must be built strongly and believably. To achieve this, D.C. True turned to another figure from the Chicago theater scene.

Steve Pickering is an award-winning actor and director, as well as adapter and artistic designer. It is in those latter capacities that D.C. True has retained him to head up scripting, dialog and character design. The design of CyberJudas calls for such precision of script and characterization that Athanas felt that a specialist was necessary.



Among Pickering's initial tasks was the need to develop the advisors themselves as distinct people, including dossiers on their history as well as more thorough treatments of their personality. Each advisor must have various moods, motives and reactions. While the algorithms beneath the behavior fall somewhat into A.I. designer Antonick's bailiwick, the translations of these deep structures into visible actions are up to Pickering.

This design, too, is subject to intense change. nearly every action the player takes will be through, with, or in spite of one or more of the advisors. Their moods and inclinations must change swiftly and yet remain believable. To enhance this believability, Athanas and Pickering have sought ways to convey information subtly as well as overtly. For example, each character will have a set of gestures that help produce a composite picture of their current mood and attitude towards the player. This will hardly undercut the importance of Pickering's dialog, but will subtly underscore the signals being sent. Each advisor must be a distinct, explorable and explicable personality for the CyberJudas concept to work

The Show Must Go On

The previous installment of this series discussed the three primary designer's (Antonick, Athanas and subject expert Dr. Brad Stock) goals and proclivities for the initial concepts of CyberJudas. Now, as the theory of the game moves along, various additions are being made, like the importation of the theater-based talent. Still to come are specific articles on the A.I. routines of Antonick and the final graphics as produced by Athanas. Looming on the horizon as well for Team True is the ultimate feasibility and technical capability of many of these games: will there be enough memory? Will these graphics be possible at a decent frame rate with current data-streaming technology? The ideas behind CyberJudas are evolving and becoming fully fleshed out; but there's much to be done before the curtain is ready to rise.

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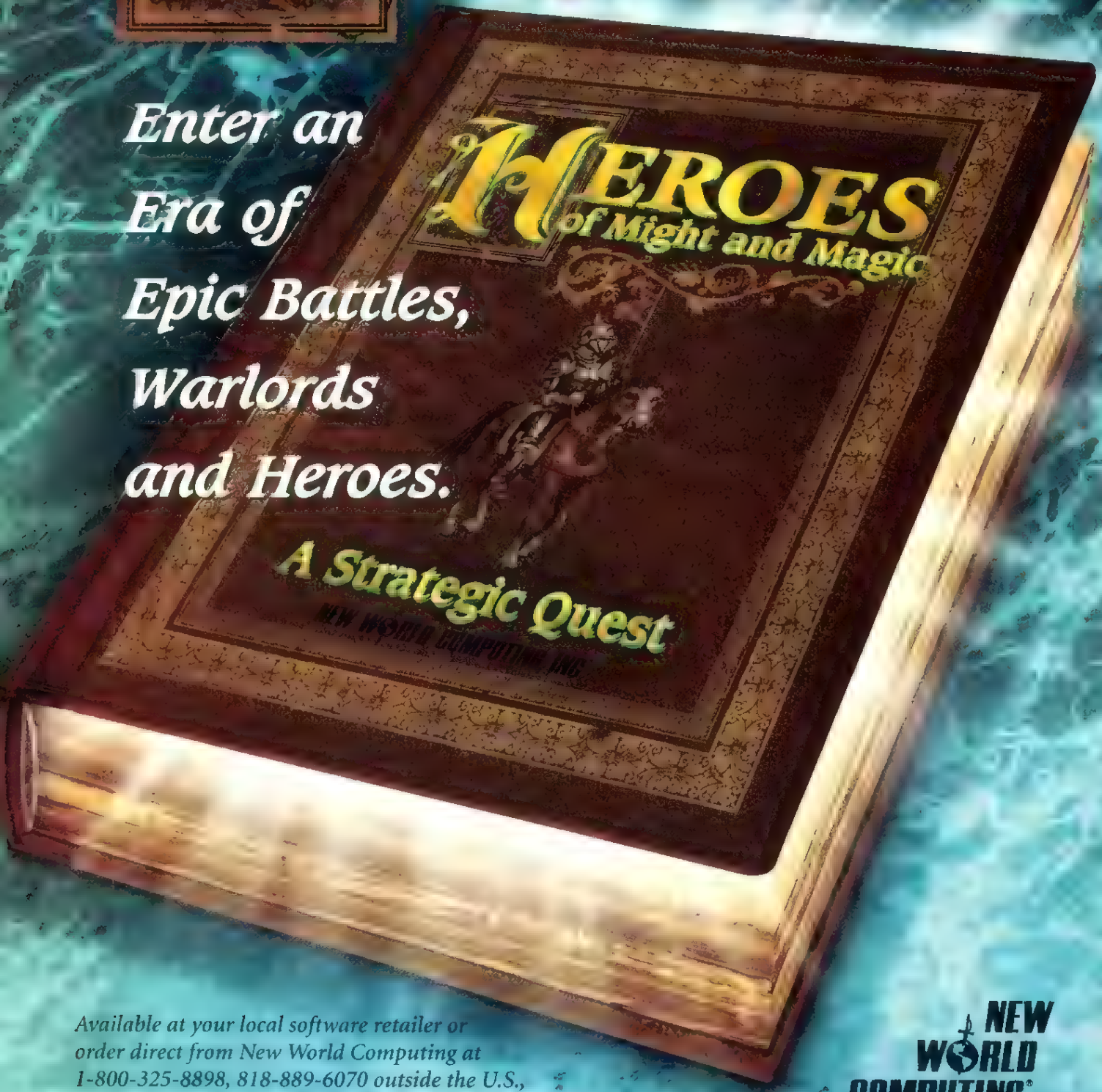

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KEVIN PERRY HOMES IN ON AVALONCON IV

SILICON ASSAULT

There were only two computers, set up quietly off to one side, and only shown for one of the four days. They made no loud sounds, nothing to attract much attention. Still, they were an unspoken centerpiece, a calm center of a storm of controversy.

During a weekend in which empires were won and lost, histories made and forgotten, amidst all the broadsides and cavalry charges, the real battle was a quiet clash of mindsets. Avaloncon was a gathering of some of the nation's (and world's) finest wargamers, many of whom have been playing since the heyday of the wargame in the 1970s. Will they embrace the new direction of Avalon Hill? But let's not get ahead of ourselves.

Avaloncon IV

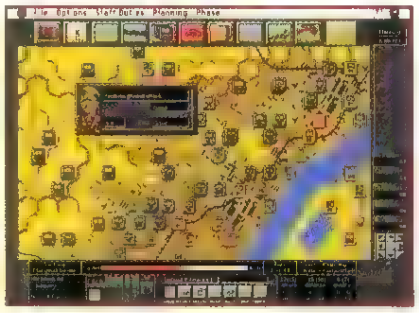
Between Thursday, August 4, and Sunday, August 7, an estimated 1500 people attended Avalon Hill's tournament convention at the Hunt Valley Inn in Hunt Valley, Maryland. For many, the attraction was simply the open gaming with new people of similar ability and caliber. For most, however, the tournaments were the draw. In a time-consuming, intellectually challenging hobby like wargaming, good opponents and the opportunity to engage them at will are rarities. Here was an extended weekend full of chances to meet and compete with hundreds of other people with the same interests.

Avalon Hill obviously has a vested interest in promoting its games. Yet not only have they shouldered the administrative costs and headaches of holding the convention, they also provide plaques and gift certificates for the finalists in every tournament–including the tournaments for games that are out of print and haven't generated fresh revenue in many years. The gamers themselves are responsible for much of the tournament as well; each tournament is designed and hosted by a volunteer gamemaster.

But, dedicated wargamer though I am, the above reasons were not why I was there. Avalon Hill is entering the computer game market with precision and force. Over the years, they've put out over 350 games, several of which have dedicated followers numbering in the tens of thousands, if not more. On paper, therefore, a computer game converted from one of these board games would seem to have a built-in audience. Or would it?

Marching into Now

In the issue of The General (Avalon Hill's magazine discussing the strategy and tactics of its games), the editorial announced that Avalon Hill would implement computer game development in addition to (and possibly in favor of) board game development. Don Greenwood, writer of the editorial (and wearer of many hats at Avalon Hill, including designer and developer of many games) spoke of his and other designers' refusal to accept the computer



as a viable alternative for serious games. He mentioned that he had had his "head stuck in the sand" for too long, and things would be changing at Avalon Hill.

This may seem odd to those who have always viewed the computer as a serious gaming forum. But many hardcore wargamers (and designers) have always been suspicious of computers. The reasons behind this are twofold. Firstly, many remember the first attempts by boardgame manufacturers to sing the praises of microcomputer wargames (Avalon Hill included) back in the days of the Apple II. Needless to say, the computers (and programmers) were not sophisticated enough to accurately reproduce a good boardgame. This experience has produced a once bitten, twice shy attitude among many.

The second reason is more pernicious. Hardcore gamers contend that current AI standards aren't high enough to give them a serious challenge. This is an accurate assessment of a problem endemic to our industry. Novices are able to crush the computer opponents in many wargames; in other cases, the computer is designed to cheat to provide the player with a decent challenge. Obviously, this is unacceptable.

Please turn to page 104

Never Lose Sight Of How Pinball Should Be Played.

A truly great pinball game is more than great graphics and spectacular sounds, more than the latest arcade features like 3D ramps and three multi-ball play, more than fast ball movement and precise flipper control, and it's more than being able to see the whole playfield at once so you can aim your shots. A great pinball game has that unique quality of playability and never-ending challenge that keeps you coming back for...*just one more game* and a shot at your new high score!

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New York Times–"The realism is striking... [Crystal Caliburn] will be at the top of Silicon Santa's gift list this year."

Inside Mac Games– "ARCADE GAME OF THE YEAR"

Computer Game Review– "Crystal Caliburn sets a new standard. For realistic pinball on a computer, there's nothing like this game."

Electronic Entertainment– "Crystal Caliburn is simply the best, most realistic, most challenging pinball simulation for the Macintosh yet." (Rating: 9 out of 10)

GAMES Magazine–"You'll forget you're playing on a two-dimensional computer screen... the realism is astonishing."

MacUser–"Electronic pinball's Holy Grail." (Rating: 4 1/2 out of 5)

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS:

MACINTOSH: 13" or larger monitor, 256 colors, and 4MB RAM.

WINDOWS: 386 or higher microprocessor, Microsoft® Windows 3.1, 256 color SVGA display, and 4MB RAM.

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Yet many of Avalon Hill's core group of fans have been contending with a similar problem for many years–the lack of a suitable nearby opponent. Thus most have been playing others by mail, a painstaking and laborious process that takes as much patience as strategic skill. A single game can take nearly a year to complete, as well as necessitating a permanent storage area for the game in progress.

This is a field that (as Greenwood rightly states) the computer is singularly well-suited to aiding in. Even if these conversions are little more than frameworks for play-by-mail games (providing an impartial judge and perfect record-keeper in the bargain), they are certainly worth developing. As he says, having played a game by e-mail, he won't go back to the regular mail for his game playing.

But Do I Have to Go?

Many expected a storm of controversy at Avaloncon due to Greenwood's unequivocal statements. But reaction was more muted than some might think.

To be sure, many oppose the redirecting of the company towards an entirely silicon-based production line, but that seems unlikely to happen. The computer game industry is a growth industry, while the board game one is largely static. But Avalon Hill occupies a dominant position in the wargame market and only a starter's position in the computer market. It would be foolish to squander decades of growth needlessly.

But few seemed to hate the idea completely. Some took a neutral stance, while many were quite happy to see the changes. These were mostly younger attendees, who likely enjoy other computer games as well. Most importantly, most expressed reservations about the computer's ability to play the game well, not its ability to handle the game mechanics in an acceptable fashion.

If You Do It, Do It Well

The task in front of Avalon Hill's computer development teams is therefore clear: do it right or else. The pressure on them to produce quality games is perhaps more intense than on any other company. With such a large built-in following, an excellent game will not only

sell well to new audiences but will also generate thousands more sales as fans of the board game buy the new version. Conversely, a poor attempt will not only sell poorly but will actually alienate the hardcore fans from trusting the computer world again for a while.

In the face of this pressure, however, Avalon Hill brings a distinct advantage Unlike many computer companies, Avalon Hill already has a lucrative business in operation. Rather than face deadline pressure every month (as in, "The

game has to go out now or we can't pay the electric bill!"), they can afford to tweak the game until it is as good as they can make it.

So the computer presence at AvalonCon was understated. Why? Only two games were in a state that Jim Rose (Avalon Hill's executive producer in charge of the computer initiative) cared to show them in. The first was the already released Kingmaker (reviewed in our June 1994 issue; strategy guide in the July 1994 issue). The second was the beta version of 5th Fleet (previewed elsewhere in this issue).

More telling were my conversations with Rose. For example, Third Reich for the computer is on hold pending the completion of its AI routines. In fact, several of the champions from the Third Reich tournament are aiding in building and testing appropriate AI managers. Delaying a release until the AI is powerful enough is a luxury that more companies wish they had.

Avalon Hill isn't depending entirely upon its own programmers and developers to launch its current computing ventures. 5th Fleet, for example, is being coded by Stanley Associates, whose staff includes former officers from every branch of military service. Normally a Department of Defense software contractor, Stanley Associates makes logistical support and military simulation software for the U.S. armed forces. Other development teams include SimTex Software (makers of Master of Orion) and Atomic Games (of V for Victory fame). The latter company is spearheading Avalon Hill's venture into games not based upon one of their boardgames.

Into the Future

That's why a convention featuring only two computers for only a portion of the time available warrants mention in a computer gaming magazine. Kingmaker was just the point man in an army of releases that will alter the wargaming landscape whether they succeed or fail.

Plus, Avaloncon will not ignore the presence of computer versions for long. Head-to-head convention play on an impartial system is a definite future possibility. Of course, by the time of the con next year, there will be quite a few more releases under Avalon Hill's belt, including Blackbeard, Diplomacy, Third Reich, and possibly even Advanced Civilization, 1830 and Beyond Squad Leader.

If you're at all a dedicated wargamer, you've probably played Avalon Hill games. You could do worse than attend Avaloncon next year; not only would you get a glimpse at further computerization of the wide library of Avalon Hill games, but you'd also put in some intense wargaming and meet some nice opponents (thanks for the rides and the games, Stefan and Rich!). Just because it's a non-silicon tournament now doesn't mean it will always be.

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HCGK5

• Jennifer McDonald

When you were first approached about doing this, what did you think about getting involved in a computer game?

JM: "I was excited about it. I thought it would be great. I had never heard of Wing Commander, sorry to say. The closest I'd ever come to a computer game is Pac-Man. That's as advanced as I've gotten. I wish I had known that there are all these books describing the Wing Commander universe."

Has it met your expectations?

JM: "Oh yeah, way beyond. This is the first interactive [game] with live actors of this quality that's been done, so nobody knew what was going to happen. I had no idea that there would be nothing on the set—ever—not even a basketball. I didn't know we were going to have to fake everything."

Did anybody give you that impression when they talked to you about it?

JM: "No, they said 'you will have computer animated backgrounds,' but I thought there would be more of a set and just a background. I wasn't aware that the whole set was going to be generated by a computer. So that's been really interesting to do that, to walk up a ladder into wherever and try to have to imagine it."

How about the forming of several scenes in different variations?

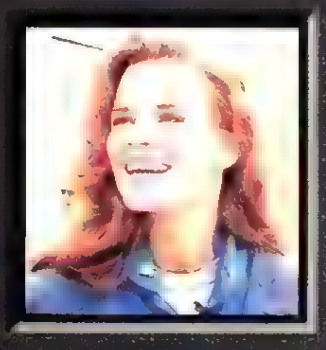
JM: "Oh, that's the worst! I hate that! It's fun, but I hate when we shoot twenty five scenes on the right side and we go back and shoot the same scenes with my close-up. That's really difficult, because generally you learn to get into one idea and then you film that and you go onto the next thing. [Here] you might have a love scene, a scene where you kill someone, a scene where you're angry and a scene where you are happy all in rapid succession."

Do you think this is something you'd want to do again?

JM: "Yeah! Are you kidding? I'm interested to see how they're going to get into films like this that aren't necessarily games. I'm interested to see how it's going to branch out into feature film-type stuff with the same generated sets and the same interactive quality. Tape is cheap. Tom can have his little fantasy takes and we can do whatever we want and don't have to worry that it costs $7,000 a reel. And the quality is great. That's one thing that surprised me. The quality of the image is a lot better than I thought it was going to be."

How has Chris been to work with?

JM: "He's great. I really like him. I think it's great because he has an emotional investment in the material and he wrote it. That's the best thing you can have as an actor is someone who is really familiar with the material and who knows what he wants. He has an exact take on what he wants. He's straightforward. He's very fond of saying 'Do it better.'"



1 2 3 4 5

• Ginger Lynn Allen

The first time you were approached about doing something like this and you found out what it was all about, what was your reaction?

GLA: "Confusion? This was something that I really had no clue as to what it would be like or how it was done or who watched it. I just recently bought my first computer and I learned how to play solitaire, and this is a little bit bigger than that (laugh). I guess I was excited, a little nervous. I was working in a medium I had never worked in before, so I turned my nervousness into excitement and used it."

Personally and professionally, is this a new challenge for you?

GLA: "I think it's challenging as far as the way scenes are shot. Normally on a shoot, you have a couple of actors and the scenes are done back and forth. You work on one scene. This is shot primarily from one angle with all of the different scenes consecutively and then you turn around and shoot the other way. At times, I've been a little confused as to which scene I'm shooting. It's been a really nice shoot as far as the ensemble cast and the whole attitude of the crew. It's been one of the more pleasant shoots I've worked on."

A lot of people are saying this is the new media. How does the acting community view what you are doing here?

GLA: "More and more people that I've spoken to are really into this. I had no idea that so many people played these games. I went around to the different stores and checked out what was available and I went to the convention center when they had the big interactive convention, and it was huge! There were directors and producers and big studio people that are completely into this because it is a new medium where you can become involved. It's not like watching a movie. A lot of people will see this as an alternative to just plain old movie watching."

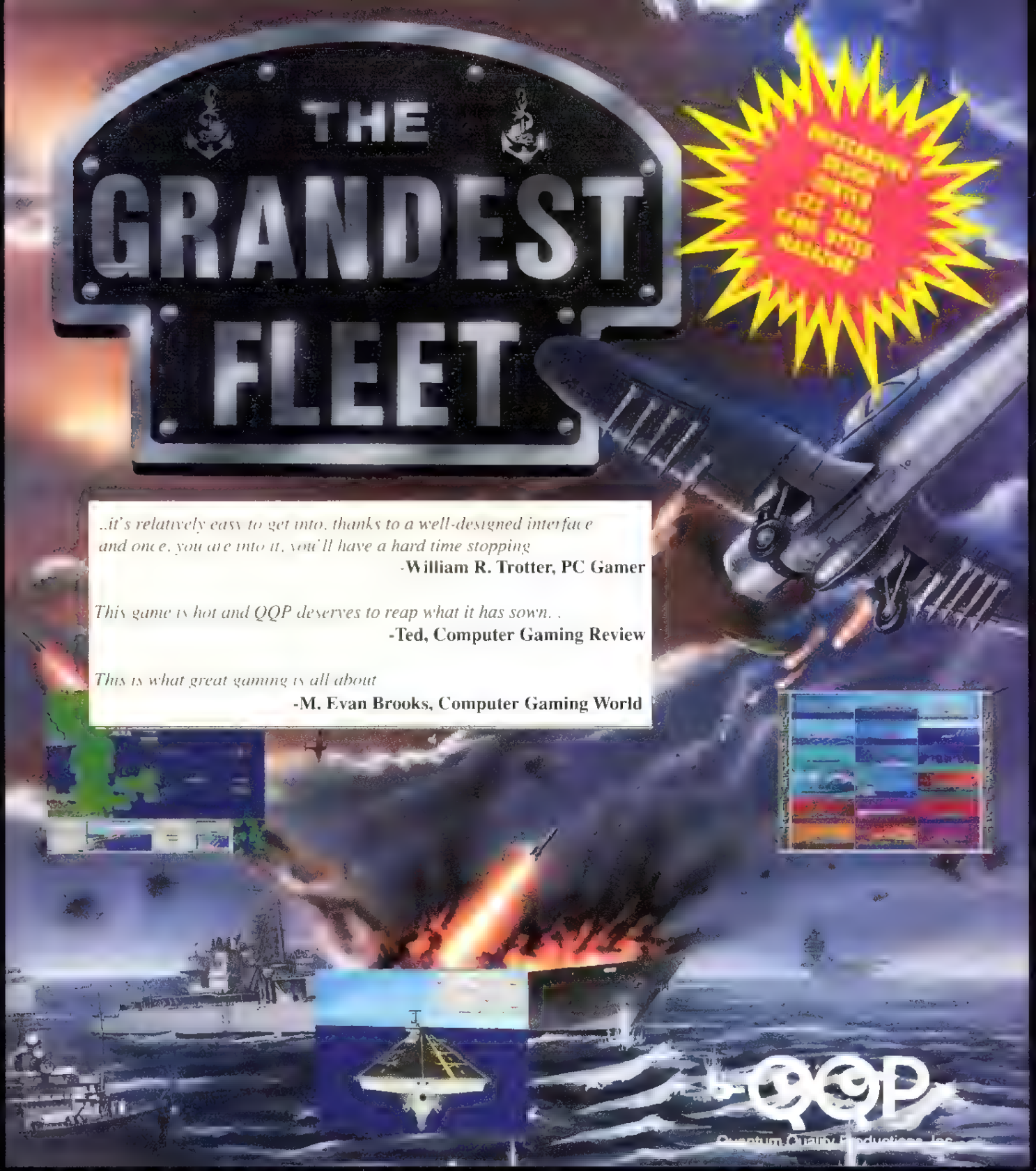
Any hesitations at all getting into this?

GLA: "I was very attracted to the character—I loved Rachel. She's spunky, she's feisty, she's a mechanic—and for the most part I haven't really played those types of roles. I wasn't quite sure what to expect, and it's been a pleasant surprise. I think any reservations I had were about shooting a scene with several different endings."

Have you done anything where you didn't have the sets out there, and how difficult is that?

GLA: "When I first walked on the set and there was no set, I thought I was in the wrong place. Working on a green screen is...green. It's very green (laugh). Playing Rachel, I work with a lot of the aircraft, and the weaponry, and to physically not have those in my hands or to see what I'm working on...is bizarre. At first you feel completely out of place—you're out of your element, everything is completely different than you're used to working with and then you kind of fall into the whole fantasy thing and let your imagination run. I think that's been the most fun."

Please turn to page 108



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• Tom Wilson

So, you were hanging out one day and sombody came up to you and said "You wanna be in Wing Commander III?". . . what was your first impression?

TW: "There I was at the counter at Schwab's drugstore in Hollywood, much like Lana Turner was years gone by. Chris Roberts comes up and says "Hey, how about being in an interactive-CD-ROM-computer sort of entertainment-style-game-film-experience?" My first reaction, of course, was to say "What?" Then I agreed to do it. It's a lot of fun, actually. It's a very interesting thing for me, who's done a lot of feature films and a lot of different kinds of entertainment."

What kind of challenge has it been?

TW: "Well, it's a challenge that I've been presented before in the Back to the Future movies, where it's pretty heavy technical requirements, which pin you in a bit."

What about being on a set where there is no set?

TW: "Yeah, the set that is not a set. I've done a lot of green screen work, so I'm sort of used to it, but the first time you walk in there and just see giant green wall, you think "Is this some kind of kid's Nickolodeon show? When is the slime gonna come down from the roof?" It's really interesting to watch through the monitor. You can see what the ship looks like, and then it's just pretending. Basically it takes you into more acting because you have to pretend more."

What is your view on this medium as an entertainment vehicle? Are we going to see more actors involved in computer games?

TW: "I think that more and more actors will be involved with the computer and computer games and interactive things, because you can't deny that it's the future. This is an interesting opening for me into the world of CD-ROM and interactive games. I almost lose my words because the possibilities are endless."

Has it been difficult at all to have multiple version of the same scene?

TW: "Sometimes it's a memorization challenge because a lot of the lines are sort of similar but have little spins to them. You're saying something not totally opposite but a bit different and leading the scene in another direction. As far as knowing what direction the scene is headed, as an actor, you just do your job. That's why we're hired; because we are supposed to be able to learn this stuff and do it right."

What's it been like working with Chris Roberts?

TW: "It's really a lot of fun to work with a director, and Chris is definitely one of them, who is the guy you come to when you are lost. When you are doing a story that changes into two three four, directions, there's a guy that you come to where you know he's the guy who understands exactly what's happening. Chris has this 200 megabyte hard drive in his head where he just turns and explains "Why, of course! Silly Rabbit! It's easy if you'd just had a brain stem as large as mine!" So he always knows the answers, and that's his job as the director."

1 2 3 4 5

• Jason Bernard

You've been doing this two and a half weeks. What's the general feeling about what you are doing here?

JB: "I enjoy it. It's challenging as an actor, because you get to play things two different ways depending on the outcome of the game, and that makes it even more interesting."

Is it challenging compared with what you've done with much of your career.

JB: "Well, it's more challenging than sitcoms, but all forms of acting are basically the same, but they have different ways that you go about doing them. They all have a different approach. The approach that you have here is that you have to be more flexible because you are going to play two different things. So you can't be as staunch one way and then not be able to recover from that."

Any concerns when you went into this about getting into uncharted territory?

JB: "Not at all. I was looking forward to it. I think that this medium is going to be the movies of the future and that a lot of (projects) will be made this way. They will build movie houses where you can interact with the movie."

What about the set itself and working without any backdrop or set? Does that make it any tougher for you?

JB: "Not really, because you see what it looks like on the monitor, so you know where you are and what you are dealing with. You are dealing with enough of reality in whatever props you are using to justify whatever it is you are doing. It's all imagination. I don't find it any more difficult. I can see where some actors would, but I don't find it more difficult."

You were talking about how any time you are acting, you have to put yourself. . .

JB: ". . .In a certain frame of mind, or you have to imagine that this is going on anyway, so to me it's the same."

How rewarding is acting in this mode for you?

JB: "Well, the reward is. . .if you can accomplish doing this two different ways, I just find that rewarding, when I feel like I've done it. It feels good. It's a reward in itself."

What's the feel in the acting community about this medium?

"I don't really hang out with that many actors, because they are a strange breed and jealous of one other. There is a snobbery about this kind of work, that a real actor wouldn't do this kind of thing, just like there used to be a snobbery about doing commercials."

Is this refreshing to you since it is so new compared to what you've done?

JB: "Extremely."

How so?

JB: "The unreality that you have to deal with, in a way, enhances more reality, because the actor has to bring so much more to it, so much more believability. You can't look around and see the spaceship. You have to carry it in your mind. When you are on a set and you can walk around and touch it, that's one form of reality. It's harder when you're on a set and you can't walk around and touch it. But you have to remember that it's there."

Please turn to page 110

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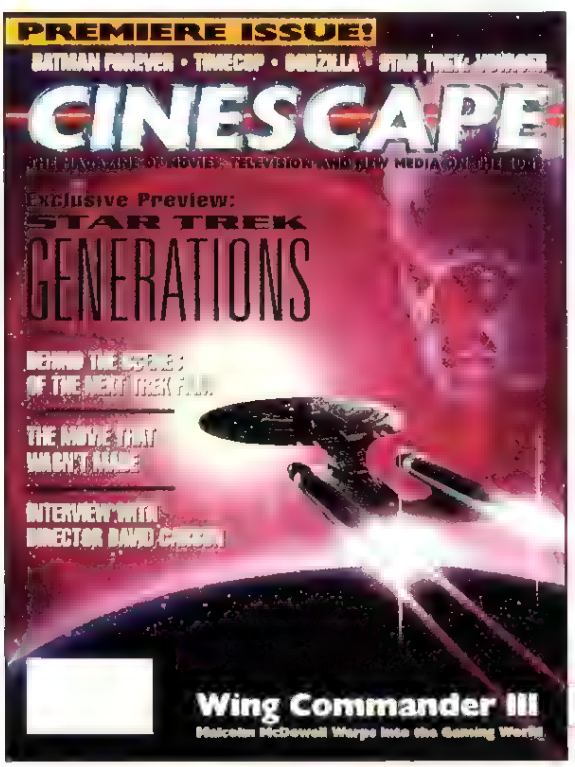

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HCGK5

Malcon McDowell

Have you done anything on a computer game before this?

MM: "No. My kids started on a Nintendo and we have now progressed to a Genesis. When I was approached to do this, I was intrigued. Absolutely intrigued by the whole idea of doing this computer game. It uses such cutting-edge techniques—putting scenery behind you when it's just green screen. I have a feeling that this is the way the movie business is going to go in the future. This may save the movie business, per se."

Was there any hesitation on your part?

MM: "No, not at all. I knew the rest of the cast and they're good actors and it's fun to do. And it's only three days of my life."

Have you done anything like this where you don't have a set?

MM: "No."

What has that been like?

MM: "It doesn't make any difference, really. You don't look at the sets when you work, you look at the other actors' eyes. You have your own imagination going—you're in the middle of this incredible starship—and out the window is another galaxy.

"I'm doing Star Trek at the moment, the movie, and they've built the sets. What we see here on the computer, they've built, and they're up to $35 million."

You see this as a new medium?

MM: "It's not a new medium, but it's certainly on the cutting edge of new technology for bringing down the enormous costs of film making. An average film costs $40 million in Hollywood right now: that's ludicrous. It has to be a huge hit to make this money back. It's a very expensive business. It means that a small, more modestly budgeted film gets caught in the middle and is not made. So if there is any way we can make the more interesting scripts that will not be just mainstream movies using this technology, I'm all for it. There's room for everything."

How do you view Chris Roberts as a first-time director?

MM: "You'd never know that. He's very precise in what he wants. He's got vision. I think all really good directors have to have vision. His communication skills are pretty good—he knows what he wants and he tells you. That's really good because then I can deliver for him, and the other actors can."

Can you see yourself doing another computer game?

MM: "Well, I don't think my future career is going to be computer games. Having said that, I'm an actor. I work in any medium. I'll do radio, TV, movies, stage, of course. This is yet another branch of our business. I would do another game if I liked it."

What kind of rewards does this sort of project have for you?

MM: "It goes back to the origins of when we were in drama school and we had to do improv. And improv, you don't want to do the same thing repeated, so you change it here and there. So, it goes back to that. That's fun to do. I don't mind doing that."

John Rhys-Davies

What did you think when you were first approached about doing this?

JRD: "I said 'What? It's an inter-what?' And then I chatted 'round and someone wised me up about it. No, seriously I did know a little bit about it before. Not a great deal. One of the attractions of doing it is because I want to know what the heck it is you guys do for a living. It's a new game in town, and I think its potential is enormous. It's interesting to see that every six months, the quality and the potential grows geometrically. This, for instance, is a world apart from anything else I've seen out there, and yet in two years time, this is going to look very primitive. It's going to look like watching the special effects in the Twilight Zone. They can still hold you with stories, but of course, our special effects are far greater. But it's a good start."

What sort of challenge has this posed for you?

JRD: "I'm very much like working on a radio play, in a way. You have to imagine the background and where you are and the context. There are no props—there's just green and actors. I don't have any problem with that: I grew up with radio, and I've always had a fairly strong visual imagination. I'm very at home with it. It's a bit tiring on the eyes after a bit, but it certainly gets around a lot of problems in terms of the expense of designing sets. It's probably the way we'll be doing things in the future.

"Basically, the truth of acting is in the listening. When you have one set of possibilities, what the listening does is produce a response that is different each time. With the interactive conversation, it goes to [a point], then it splits. One way, you're angry, you're morale is high, you hit me. The other way, your morale is low, you don't hit me. Then, it comes back again and continues. What you have to do as an actor is find the piece that works with [either possibility] identically."

How has it been working with Chris Roberts?

JRD: "He's a very remarkable young fellow. Obviously knows what he's doing, knows what he's about. He lives and breathes these things and is certainly bringing it to life for this outsider, anyway.

"It's really been a rather happy experience despite the fact that you don't have wonderful sets."

Would you want to try this again?

JRD: "Oh, I have no doubt that this is where the future is going to be. I personally have a couple of projects... one is a factually-based thing I've been privileged to be allowed to co-produce—a show based on a fine series of books on human evolution. We shall be looking at the interactive market as one of the ways of presenting this very rich and very complicated material. I also have another project, a wartime-based comedy that is very rich in terms of character. My guess is that you could build a game around it—that you could play any one of the characters. That way of exploring the life of those characters is going to be one of the tools that writers are going to use in the not-so-distant future."

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RULING WITH AN ARMORED FIST

Simulations make a quantum leap with NovaLogic's latest production

About two years ago, a company not many people had heard of released a game with the unlikely name of Comanche Maximum Overkill. This helicopter simulation went on to be one of the most influential games in terms of its engine and the Voxel Space™ technology used to create it. With the released of NovaLogic's next game coming in the near future, we took a few minutes to talk with one of the people behind CMO and the soon-to-be-released Armored Fist, John Garcia.

CGR: Why tanks? Is there anything about doing a tank game that you found particularly attractive?

John Garcia: "Sure. There are two types of sims where terrain masking is very important. One of them is, of course, helicopter sims, so we did that first. The other is tanks. The important part is that tank battles, in general, are not fought on flat terrain where they're all running around shooting each other. Rather, they position themselves, sometimes for days, finding the best place to hide and using the terrain features to the maximum. That's why we felt this was the most suitable category for the current state of the technology, which has been optimized to be viewed from a low level."

CGR: Have you considered doing a non-simulation with the same kind of technology?

JG: "Armored Fist is already a whole different generation of technology from Comanche, but it is similar. We have another game that we are currently working on called 'Hardwired,' licensed from the book of the same title. It's cyberpunk, and includes a fast-moving hovercraft-type of vehicle.

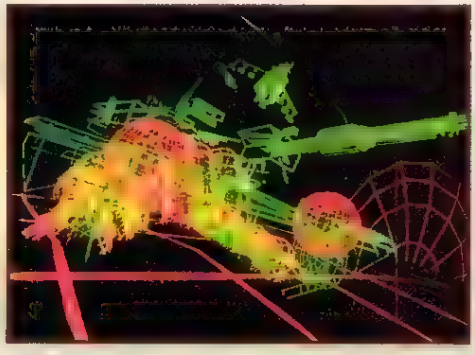
"Our next product is a companion product to Comanche called Werewolf. It's as close as you can come to a Russian counterpart to the Comanche. Once it's available, people who purchase Werewolf who also own Comanche will be able to play head-to-head or over a network. These games are really well-suited for that."

CGR: Where do you think Comanche stacks up against other sims and where do you think Armored Fist will stack up?

JG: If you compare Comanche to other helicopter sims, it has probably outsold its closest competitor by a factor of five, and it's not through its cycle yet. We haven't even discounted it. It's basically redesigned the genre completely. Armored Fist is a very unusual product. It's the most complex product we've ever developed. It has close to eight man years of programming and probably a quarter of a million lines of hand-assembled code. This is a very complex game internally. WIthout any doubt, we will leapfrog every tank sim that has ever been done, and we feel this will be the case for many years to come. It would take an established company years of commitment to develop anything in the ballpark, and that's highly unlikely.

"The numbers we were able to dig up on these genres were very similar. An average game in one of them might sell 60,000 units, and the other sold 80,000. Right now, worldwide for all products, Comanche has sold about 600,000 units. The initial orders for Armored Fist are over 100,000.

"How do they stack up against other sims in the category? Well, neither one is really a traditional simulation category. The fixed-wing flight game is traditionally much bigger."



CGR: Has the creation of Armored Fist been at all similar to Comanche?

JG: "They've been totally different. They have totally different profiles. Comanche was, in a way, easier. Kyle Freeman built this technology and it was slam-dunk. We had this really cool thing, so what do we do? It was very well-suited to helicopters and it's a pretty

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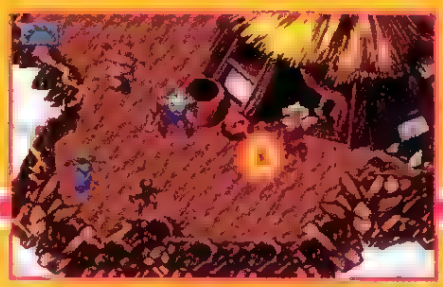

256-color VGA displays

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straightforward product. Tanks are a much more mature category, plus we had already been working on the project since 1990. We were going to ship it in the middle of last year using polygon technology—one of the reasons we delayed shipment is that we ripped out the whole polygon engine and replaced it with the Voxel Space™ technology. So it's been a very different product. It's also a lot more complex if you want to get into that level of complexity. There's a construction set that the hardcore people will like. I said earlier that terrain masking is very important. When you lay tanks down, you can dig them in, which works really well with the Voxel™ technology. You can make an impression in the terrain data and just put the tank in there so just the barrel sticks out.

"If you play with the Russian hardware, they use light-intensification which can see in near darkness but really works like an eye. If you play with the American hardware, we simulate thermal imaging, which is just heat. You can have situations where you have a tank in the trees. With the Russians, you just see trees, but with the Americans you see a tank inside the trees. We pass the heat values through the trees.

"Armored Fist is similar to Comanche in that it's very easy to just fall into it and start playing."

CGR: So the games have been a lot less similar than people might think just by looking at them.

JG: "They're completely different engines. I don't think they share a line of code and it's a fairly different design philosophy. This was not just a change of graphics."

CGR: Was there a part of the game that you thought you'd never finish?

JG: "Shipping it (laughs). No, not really. I don't think we've ever had one thing where we've thought 'This is a killer, we're not gonna get through it.' We did spend a lot of time on the AI. The construction set has probably a full man year of work in it. We know its something that a very small percentage of people use, yet we felt that the people who are really into the game would appreciate it. We spent as much time creating the construction set as some people spend with their entire game."

CGR: How did you get started in this business?

JG: "My background is all over the place. I have a degree in psychology, which I never did anything with. I went to the London Film School and I worked in films for about ten years. But I was always a technology-oriented person. I saw very early on that there were going to be micro-computers in the home. Around 1977 or so I got one of the first Apples and I got very involved with it. So I switched industries."

CGR: If you play something to relax, what do you play?

JG: "Let me think about that for a second. You have to realize that a lot of this is work. I play Tetris a lot, not necessarily because it's a favorite but because it's convenient. I play ToeJam and Earl with my kids on the Genesis. The guys who did it have a good sense of humor and really understand game play."

CGR: Is there anything in this industry that you would like to achieve, either you personally or NovaLogic as a whole, that you don't think you have achieved yet?

JG: "I don't think we've fully achieved this, but I think we are well on the road to establishing ourselves as innovators in certain areas. Looking at technology alone, there are very few houses that are developing leading-edge technology, which we are. I think we're pretty close to that goal.

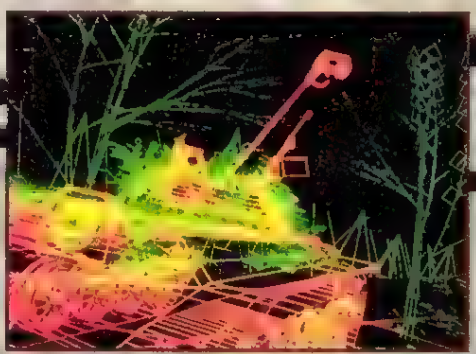
"A broader goal that I think we're on track to achieving is simply to put the best entertainment software out there."

CGR: How do you think CD-ROM has affected the way people play and the way people create games?

JG: "I don't think it has yet fully impacted people with a few minor exceptions. I think we're really going to see the impact in one or two years. In the beginning, people did the obvious—I'm not putting it down, the Trilobyte stuff, 7th Guest—which I think was pretty good. Ultimately, it was just a lot of pictures and some puzzles."

CGR: It was more or less a showpiece.

JG: "Exactly. There've been a few of those. Again, I'm not putting them down—they're very interesting, but they aren't where things are heading. What I find exciting, even though it's a simple game, are things like what EA has just released—Shockwave [on 3DO]. The integration of the additional graphics and the interactivity are starting to approach the way we want to go. I think we're going to see more like these where we don't forget about the interactivity and just give you pretty pictures."



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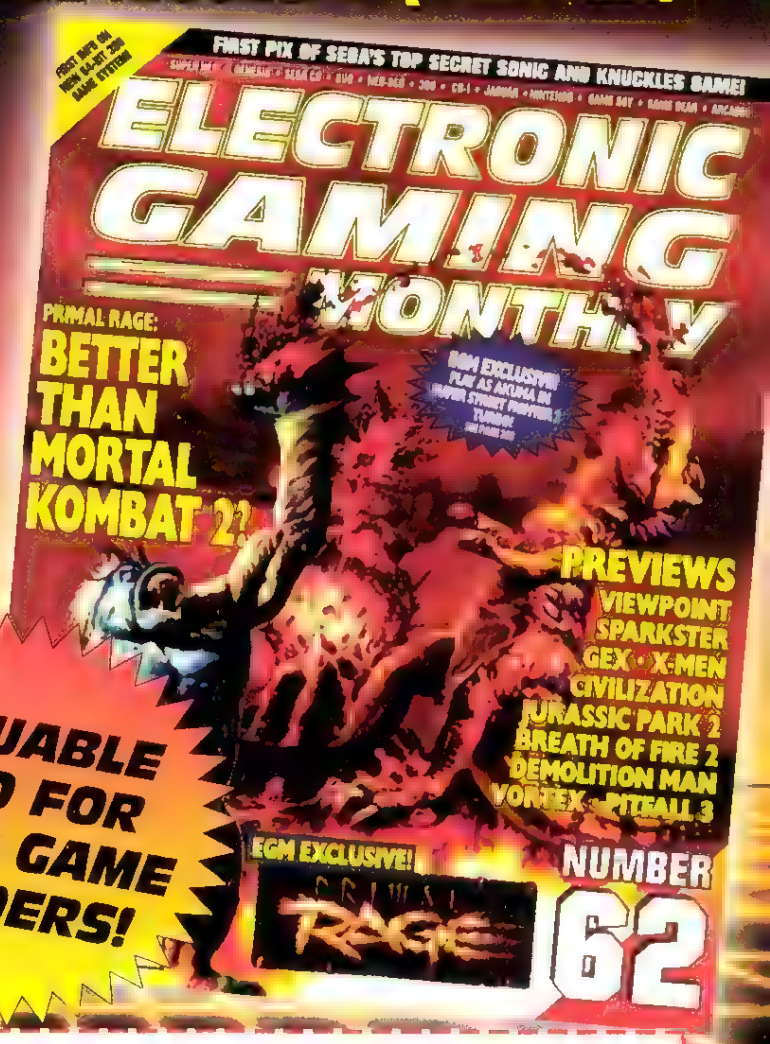

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JACKING INTO VOXEL SPACE™

An information packet on NovaLogic's ARMORED FIST and HARDWIRED

What Comanche Maximum Overkill did for helicopter flight simulations, Armored Fist will try to do for tank simulations. One of the major reasons for the excitement generated by the release of CMO and by the pending release of Armored Fist is the use of NovaLogic's Voxel Space™ technology. This technology gives the games their unique look.

NovaLogic has applied for a patent on the Voxel Space™ technology. What this does is allow the programmer to manipulate the voxels, short for volume pixels, 500 times faster than rendering programs that preceded it. It performs up to one million 3D calculations per second and allows the game designers and programmers to avoid the boxy, polygonal look of many titles. It has also allowed NovaLogic, in the cases of CMO and Armored Fist, to use actual terrain data based on diverse sources such as satellite radar mapping and the U.S. geological survey.

With Armored Fist, the player will have a chance to manipulate the voxel-created landscape with the scenario editor, allowing him or her to develop terrain best suited to a particular strategy or to create a difficult landscape to present a greater challenge.

The game will simulate realistic conditions in the American M1A2 Abrams and the M3 Bradley IFV on one side and the Soviet t-80 and BMP on the other side of the battle. The player can take either side of the conflict and will be given the option to direct the battle, controlling four platoons, or to take control of one of the tanks and go for some kills.

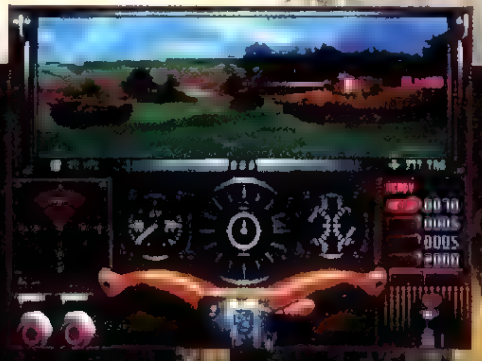
The game has been designed to be as realistic as possible beyond the abilities of the tanks and the terrain. Players in American tanks will use the latest technology to look for hidden enemies, while on the Soviet side, light amplification will be used to detect American tanks at night. Players who find themselves in a difficult situation will be able to call in artillery strikes, or, weather permitting, air strikes.

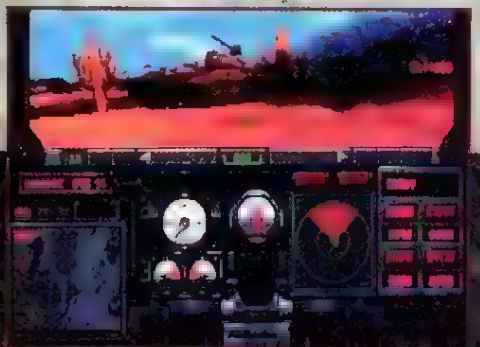
What Armored Fist does very well is offer the player an extremely detailed game, if that's what the player wants. However, the casual gamer who simply wants to sit down and drive around in a tank will not be disappointed.

We recently received an early version of the game without a manual and were able to load the game up, drive through several missions and discover the basics of putting the tank through its paces. Much of what is promised in the final version, of course, was not in this early copy, but it is likely that the completed game will remain true to earlier NovaLogic products like CMO and Wolfpack in that they will be easy to play if you want them to be, difficult if you want them to be. While the daytime missions are fun, the night missions with the thermal imaging used by the American tanks provide a whole new level to the game. The heat signatures of enemy tanks are blurry, and indistinct, which is accurate. I found it fascinating that knocking out a tank caused a slow reduction of the heat signature, as the engine shut off and no more heat was being produced. Piloting the tank and targeting were very simple. I used the joystick to move and the mouse and keyboard for controlling the interior of the tank. Most of the options are obvious—the button with a cross on it brings up a targeting reticule, for instance. Using all three controllers might sound a bit confusing, but it really wasn't. The joystick is the primary device, with a simple key command or mouse click needed occasionally. It was, in fact, one of the easiest sims to get into that I've ever played.

NovaLogic has also recently closed the deal to develop Hardwired, based on the cyberpunk novel of the same name by Walter Jon Williams. Unlike CMO and Armored Fist, Hardwired will place the player into a futuristic world and into a particular persona. This persona, a sort of anti-hero, works as a black market smuggler, moving computer chips and other pieces of technology between the small corporate city-states that have sprung up in the world of the future. True to NovaLogic's origins, as the player makes the runs from state to state, the game will place him or her into the cockpit of a Panzer hovercraft. The player will then fly across Voxel Space™ terrain. Expect that the simulator aspects of Hardwired to be less robust than those of Armored Fist, since Hardwired will be much more story driven and will have an entirely different design philosophy behind it.

-Steve Honeywell





Q.Q.P.'s

Strategies of the Month

By:Steve Cohen

The Grandest Fleet

There are many strategies for defense. One of the most popular methods is to put a submarine in the harbor and anchor it there. This works quite well in many cases, but remember there are many other defensive methods. One of my favorites is to use damaged ships to defend ports that have shipyards. This way the damaged ship, repairs itself, and the city is defended as well. Another method is, having a string of carriers anchored at a crucial passage, thus sighting the incoming ships won't be too much of a problem. Be cautious, the ruthless computer opponent can overcome these strategies!

QUOTES FROM THE EXPERTS

"The Grandest Fleet is a fun game, and one that should live a good long life on many gamer's hard drives."
-M. Evan Brooks, Computer Gaming World

"This game[The Grandest Fleet] is hot and QQP deserves to reap what it has sown"
-Ted, Computer Game Review

This is what great gaming is all about.
-M. Evan Brooks, Computer Gaming World

...it's relatively easy to get into, thanks to a well-designed interface. And once you are into it, you'll have a hard time stopping.
-William R. Trotter, PC Gamer

Bridge Olympiad

"Bridge Olympiad" is receiving rave reviews from customers across the world as one of the best new bridge games on the market. I could not begin to give strategies on bridge, for this would take volumes. There are many fantastic books that teach the nuances of this "Easy to play, tough to master" card game.

QQP's reputation for producing top-notch strategy games gets another boost with Bridge Olympiad- another winner. *-Joe Novicki, PC Gamer*

Great graphics, and smooth interface makes for quick play against strong opponents.
-PC Gamer

PGII The Pure Wargame

In the soon to be released Perfect General II wait until you see the Elephant Tanks. They are moving fortresses and we're having a lot of fun with them.

"The Pure Wargame" has many subtleties. When moving pieces, it is an excellent idea to move in smaller steps. This enables you to keep an eye on the fatigue level of your troops and their remaining movement points.

We encourage people to post their strategies and comments in the various forums on the computer networks. There are many great strategies on the networks.

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TECH SPECS

Requirements:
386/33 or faster
4 Meg RAM, VGA
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Sound Support:
Sound Blaster
and compatibles

Controller:
1 or 2 Joysticks,
Keyboard, Mouse

Available for:
PC and compatibles

Designed by:
Silicon Knights

Distributed by:
Electronic Arts

GAME SUMMARY

Control fantastic creatures in a strategic and arcade free-for-all. Protect your Orbholder while searching for the enemy's, whether against the computer or another human, live or over modem.

How to grab enemy orbs and protect your own.

Take on huge armies of Conjurers, Demons, Wizards and Vampires and still win in SSI's Dark Legions.

Dark Legions is an engrossing game of build-your-own mayhem. With sixteen different creature types, each with its own special abilities, plus the variety of power-enhancing rings and power-sapping traps, no two games will ever be alike. Even if the player chooses the exact same force and deploys it in exactly the same manner, the computer opponent will certainly choose a very different force to oppose it (not to mention the wide range of choice a human opponent would have). Therefore, strategy in Dark Legions is a matter of mix 'n' match personal preferences. Given that, this strategy guide will be less x-always-beats-y and more x-is-good-for-this.

The Map

The map is the single most important factor in choosing which troops to use. The dynamics of the game are completely different when the battles take place on a relatively small, square map rather than a huge map cut by uncrossable chasms and deep lakes.

The size of a map makes more of a difference than many players notice. For example, an Illusionist is less powerful on smaller maps. Her Illusions are that much closer to the enemy Seers; plus, the enemy may even see her create one. Conversely, a large map makes a Conjurer less useful as her creations must spend more of their precious and limited time just finding the enemy army. Large maps require mobile and agile characters and formations; small maps require just the opposite. Searching for the enemy's support troops becomes more important and more difficult on large maps, since small bands of creatures can hide more successfully. Bodyguards are more effective on smaller maps, since even Trolls will have the movement range to effect a counterstrike. All in all, the size of the map must determine which tactics are used.

Terrain is less important, but also a deciding factor. A map with two lakes, one at each end of the map, begs for a large force of Water Elementals and their special strategic ability to travel directly to the other lake, behind enemy lines and amidst his support troops. Of course, with this setup, don't place your own support forces near a lake.

Several chasms on the map can cramp mobility strategies unless significant amounts of flyers are possessed by both sides. Realize that these chasms further channel the enemy (and friendly!) forces in certain directions; significant numbers of Traps can close off a route. Just be sure to include a safe path through for friendly non-flyers.

Finally, Rocks and Trees can be deceptively difficult terrain. Since pieces do not travel diagonally, a forest takes significant time to travel through for non-flyers. A Forest filled with Traps will not only slow but also cripple enemy forces. Weaker pieces like Seers can benefit from the closed-off avenues of approach; think of the trees as non-mobile but indestructible bodyguards. Attackers must use non-conventional movement methods to assault troops in the woods.

Troop Selection

The map will influence strategy; but unit selection will dictate it. After all, flanking maneuvers are difficult at best without flankers. Of course, exact selection is an entirely personal choice. There are elements to a successful strategy that cannot, however, be ignored. Knowledge of the various types and uses of the troops is essential.

There are three basic types of troops in Dark Legions: Infantry, Flankers and Support troops. These categories are loose, and can be changed with the addition of a Ring or two to certain pieces. Obviously, Dark Legions is not Rock-Scissors-Paper; given luck or skill, any character has a shot at taking out any other character. But rarely will a Vampire take out a Demon, no matter how much luck and skill are on its side.

Flankers are troops with movement capabilities and killing power above that of normal troops. Vampires and Fire Elementals are naturals for this class, but given sufficiently friendly terrain, Water Elementals and Demons flank well also. With a combination of Rings, though, just about anything can do the job. The purpose of the Flanker, cunningly revealed in its nomenclature, is to use speed (and flight if available) to scout and flank enemy forces. It is crucial (especially on large maps) to locate the enemy's cluster of support troops as quickly as possible; the same goes for enemy Seers if friendly Illusions are to have any effectiveness.

Mobility is not the only criteria for deciding that a piece is a Flanker. Unlike the other two types, Flankers must operate alone. They must therefore be able to absorb a decent amount of punishment as well as dish it out. Vampires make especially good Flankers, since most Vampire victories add a character to the friendly side as well as bolster the Vampire's longevity. Wraiths can make decent flankers if they are handled well in combat; a good Wraith comes out of combat stronger than it went in. Wraiths also can use their teleport to leapfrog past defensive walls of Wizards.

Support troops are the anchors of your strategy. This classification includes all characters whose strategic abilities far outweigh their combat abilities. Conjurers, Illusionists and Seers are the biggies here, with Templars and Wizards supporting them in turn. Without a few Rings, a Thief belongs in this classification as well. These are the characters who must be protected from the enemy Flankers and Infantry in order to further their own activities.

Infantry is pretty much anything else. These are the common assault troops, used as bodyguards, wave attackers and roving trap detectors. Don't discount them too easily; in waves they'll smash Flankers and any one is usually a match for the entire Support team. Their biggest advantage is price: five Berserkers cost the same as one Conjurer.

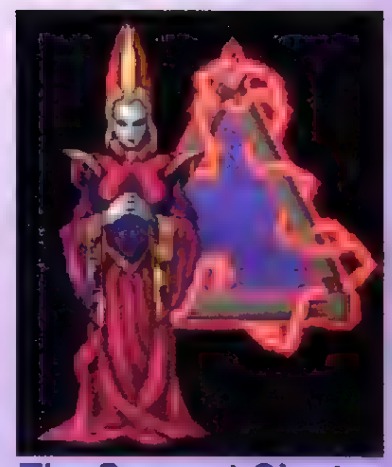
The Big Plan

Just categorizing the pieces doesn't get us anywhere. Usage on the strategic map is the key to victory. Without overwhelming levels of skill in combat itself (or a computer opponent set to Hopeless), certain actions are obviously suicide (Berserker vs. Demon) or gravy (Demon vs. Illusionist). A plan of attack must be conceived at the beginning, implemented first through initial placement of pieces and then through their development. Each turn will alter the plan slightly as combats are resolved and new enemies come into view; but the thrust of the plan must remain as true as possible.

Given the ultimate goal of the game (kill the Orbholder, who could be anybody), there is only one master plan that makes sense: Kill Them All. There are no tricky sweeps to secret areas, no crafty strikes at the linchpin of enemy fortifications; only by complete enemy annihilation will victory be assured. If all the enemies are systematically destroyed, the Orbholder will turn up somewhere.

This doesn't mean that strategic planning has no place. In fact, without it, friendly forces are more likely to be decimated than enemy forces. Think of it as the thinking being's slaughter.

Here's the basic plan: set up a strong base (or two) of Support, field a large block of Infantry, and put a few Flankers on the wings. Well, of course it sounds simple: it's just the basic strategy. Here's a few hints on how to do it right.



The Support Cluster

This is probably the most obvious of setup techniques, inasmuch as it's featured prominently in the presets of the scenarios. Basically, buy at least one Templar for every Illusionist or Conjurer (two if the points are available). Then arrange a small cluster in which the other characters (including Wizards) are touching as many Templars as possible. A checkerboard or hollow square, depending on terrain and points available, will usually result.

All this is obvious. But where should the cluster be placed? The map holds all the answers. On a small map, hide the cluster in a corner. A human opponent will probably know it's in a corner, but not which one. Besides, the no diagonal rule of movement means that it still takes more time to approach if it's off to one side. On a larger map, be more devious. Use one of the corners only if it offers more advantageous terrain.

Terrain is the other big factor. Don't place the cluster in rough terrain, no matter how inviting it looks from the defensive standpoint. Remember that summoned creatures and illusions will be leaving the cluster at a constant rate; rough terrain will only slow their advance. Instead, try to use the terrain (especially

Traps

Well, frankly, traps aren't all that they're cracked up to be. They rely on an enemy stepping in exactly the wrong place. Of course, even when an enemy does, it might be immune to it or not overtly bothered by it. It's better to use the threat of traps than pay the points for actual traps. How? By leaving suspicious holes in your defense. Find a narrow path, one easily blocked off by traps, and conspicuously ignore it. (Obviously, this strategy only works against a live opponent.) This might channel the enemy detection efforts down that path and cause heavier units to avoid the area; but then again, maybe not. Best just to avoid the whole mess and use the points on another Conjurer or Illusionist.

Rings

Well, much of the same advice applies here. Putting two or three Rings on a character makes that character worth a couple hundred points—a serious risk. Rings of Life are worth it on Conjurers and Illusionists, but that's about it. Just use the savings to buy more characters; an extra strength point can't equal an Orc.

Phantoms

Special note must be made of the Phantom. Neat though it may seem, it is *totally useless* against the computer. It is not invisible in either combat or on the strategic map. Don't waste the points on it.

Roving Support

Two types of Support troops are not going to stay in the safety of the Cluster. The Thief and the Seer both need to wander in order to maximize the potential of their abilities. This necessitates the formation of a Roving Support band. It usually will contain a Seer, a Thief (or two) and numerous bodyguards. This cluster looks for and destroys Traps, Illusions and Phantoms, if possible (take along a spare Elemental to bash the Phantoms with). Make two Rovers if the points are available. For added zest, send along a Wizard or two (with Rings of Speed and Life and two Templars in tow). They'll benefit from the protection the Seer needs anyhow and stop an attacker cold, as well as playing havoc with the mobile operations of the enemy (who won't expect roving Wizards).

Building a Better Cluster

Staff the Cluster with as many Templars as the point budget allows. Place the Conjurers and Illusionists near as many of the Templars as possible. Don't forget, though, that non-flying creatures and illusions will need an easy way to leave the Cluster (not to mention that space must be cleared to conjure or create them in the first place). Stick a Seer nearby for protection against Phantoms, and then ward all outside edges with as many Wizards as possible.

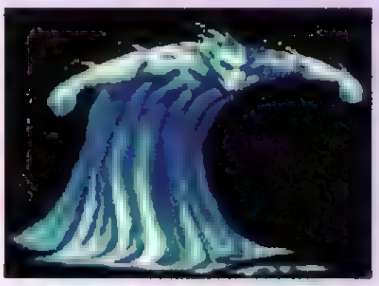
chasms) to cover approach lanes. Place the Support Cluster near dense forests, chasms and rock-strewn plains; never in them. Also beware of lakes—enemy Water Elementals would love to transport themselves right to the Cluster.

In a large point battle, the resources will be available to be a little trickier. For the straightforward approach, build a huge single cluster; it'll have masses of Wizards on the defense and produce a steady stream of new troops, making it extremely difficult to assault successfully. A production-minded and different approach is to build two Clusters in different locations. This will allow better map coverage for the conjured and illusory troops, streaming them in from separate directions. In a battle with enough purchase points to make this a viable plan, one Cluster will probably be knocked out, but at a horrible cost to the attacker.

Once its defense is secured, the Cluster can get around to its primary function: troop production. Try to have enough Rings of Life and Templars so that each Conjurer or Illusionist can conjure or create at least one creature every turn. This will produce a tide of expendable troops, all of which should be hurled into the fray as soon as possible. After all, the conjured creatures are losing strength with each passing turn, and the illusions risk discovery and destruction by enemy Seers. Besides, the constant stream of characters will provide a mobile point defense for the Cluster itself.

On the Flanks

Next, set up the Flankers. Each flank should sport at least one, but preferably more will be available. As was said before, Vampires and Fire Elementals make the best flankers, and in fact make a good team, since each covers for the weaknesses of the other. It would be difficult to go wrong with a front consisting of three Vampires and three Fire Elementals, one of each on each side and a pair up the middle. Throw in a couple of Wraiths for spice and the enemy will have its hands full with just the outriders of the friendly force.



The job of the Flankers is to locate the enemy. If even a lone Vampire finds the enemy Support Cluster, havoc will ensue; a well-placed Supernova will also remove plenty of the enemy soft troops. Unfortunately, the first character to locate the enemy cluster will be doing a popsicle impression almost immediately. That's why Flankers should operate in pairs; the other one can follow up an ally who froze up at a crucial moment.

Flankers should generally avoid contact with enemy Infantry. Only slow down to attack lone scouts and roving soft targets like Seers and Thieves. In fact, destruction of enemy Seers should be high on the Flanker's list of tasks to accomplish. Never have a Flanker attack just to attack; it wastes needed strength. The exception is Vampires, who need a constant supply of blood in order to operate properly. Of course, if the Vampire wins the combat, a new, eminently expendable character is available, possibly near other targets of opportunity.

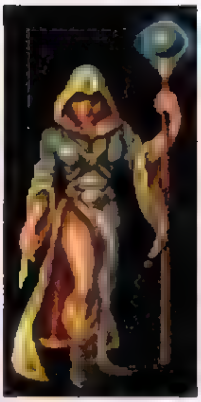
Send the Flankers up the flanks until map edge is reached; then wrap to the center and back down. Once the enemy Support Cluster is shattered, the number of enemy troops on the field is limited. Non-Clustered support characters are easily hunted down and destroyed piecemeal, as are the rest of the troops.

And Up the Middle

Form the rest of the troops, the Infantry, into blocks of four to six characters each. Group them by movement range and type, not by combat capabilities. This way, they'll stay together as they are moved en masse up the field. Once the Flankers have identified and located a concentration of enemy pieces, send in the Infantry blocks to take it out.

The fact that the block is of variable composition allows it to take out virtually any opponent. No piece can withstand a skillful assault by three different pieces. Keeping Infantry in block formation reduces their vulnerability in a similar fashion; even if a Berserker is killed, the Troll next to him can destroy his killer on the next turn. This density does leave the unit as a whole vulnerable to both Vampires (Zombies in the ranks) and Fire Elementals (Supernovas are bad), so avoid these characters or keep something around to deal with them, like a Demon or Elemental

When the squad falls to only two characters or so in strength, have them hold position until the wave of Conjured and Illusory creatures arrives to fill in the empty slots.



This method of advancement may seem needlessly slow, but it will reduce the number of lone characters wandering around (lone character= sitting duck). Plus, nothing is more fun than assaulting the enemy Cluster with five or six Berserkers and Orcs (Wizards can't stop them all!).

That's the Plan?

Yep. It's too simple to be confused by the chaotic conditions of the Dark Legions battlefield and too strong to be turned aside easily. Flankers scout and snipe, Support troops churn out more troops to feed into the Infantry that kills everything. Sure, an incredibly complex plan could be formed that hinges on the special ability of one or two types of characters, but most of the game would be squandered trying to get the troops into the positions to do this.

Kids, Try This One At Home

All the above seem a little too academic, pedantic, obvious? Looking for the really *different* way to do things? Try these suggestions and challenges on for size and stop complaining

•One thousand points will buy fifty Berserkers. Think about it. Especially on a small map. For ease of play, divide them up into five teams of ten; order nine of them to escort the leader. That way, only five orders need be given per turn. Only do this against the computer: a live opponent would reach right through the modem wire with murder on his mind.

•Make a Wall o' Wizards. On a small map, stretch five or ten Wizards in a line with a line of Templars right behind them. March them up the center of the field, guarded only by Flankers. Freeze anything that moves until it dies, or let the Flankers eat it if it's small.

•Give a Troll two Rings of Speed, a Ring of Life and a two Rings of Power. Let it rest between battles.It makes a great Flanker just from the surprise value—kills enemy Demons dead!

•Buy just Conjurers and Templars.

-Kevin Perry

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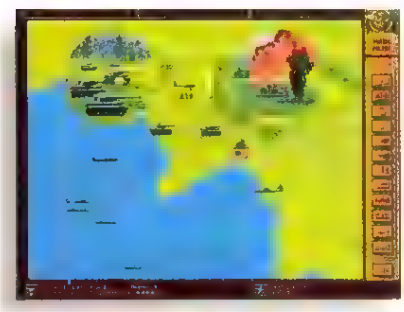

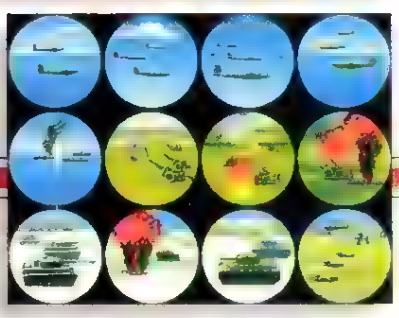

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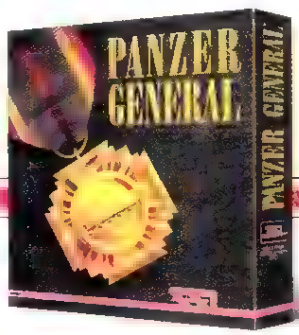

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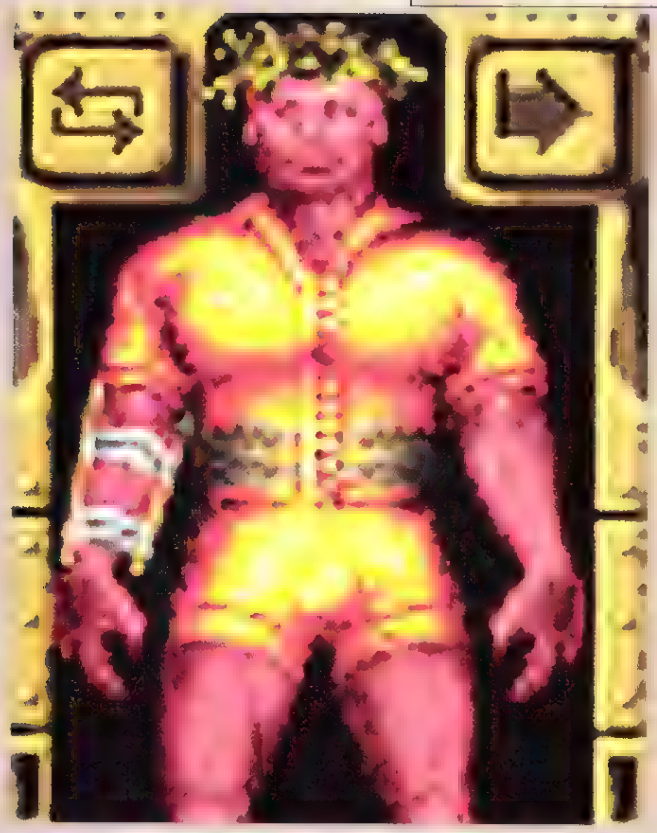


YOU'RE WORTHLESS AND WEAK, NOW DROP AND GIVE ME TWENTY!

SGT. JONES AMENDS THE AWE BOOKLET IN A WAY THAT ONLY HE CAN, TO HELP YOU STAY ALIVE IN ROBINSON'S REQUIEM.

TECH SPECS

Requirements:
386+, 4 MB RAM
VGA

Sound Support:
Sound Blaster

Controller:
Mouse/Keyboard

Available for:
PC and compatible

Designed by:
ReadySoft

Distributed by:
ReadySoft

GAME SUMMARY

In the twenty-second century, you have crashed landed on an alien planet and must spend most of your time trying to survive while working towards a way to escape. Your computer is your only companion and means of diagnosing ailments.

The Survival Guide

by Sergeant Jawbreaker Jones

If you were stranded on a deserted island with nothing but the shirt on your back, could you survive? On Gilligan's Island they fared quite nicely. But, hey, this isn't TV, this is a computer game (spit); hard-core, tough, unforgiving. The Professor is not going to help your sorry butt here. But then, what good was he there?

If you think you're up to the task, then go, forge ahead with your stupid little A.W.E. Booklet. That thing couldn't help you tie your shoes let alone survive in a wild wilderness (spit). Lucky for you the planet you're on is a lot like Earth so there will be plenty of familiarity with your surroundings. But you're going to need more. This ain't no Kings Quest (spit) fairy boy!

Build a fire close to the lake so you can boil water without having to move.

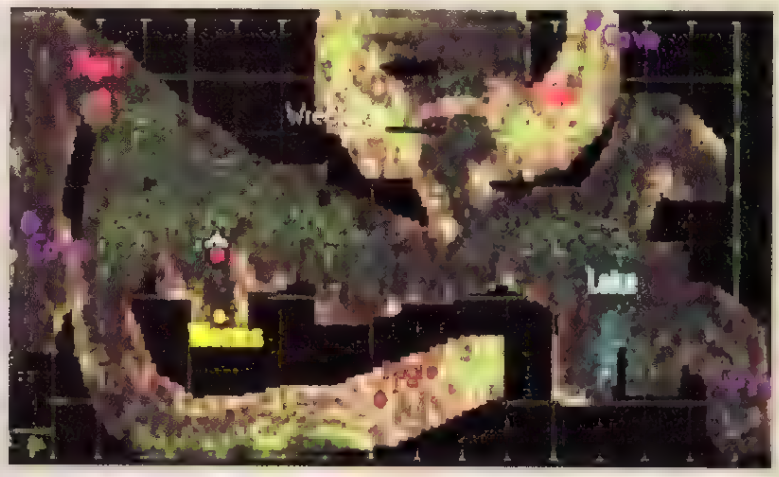
The first thing to do is to know the surrounding area. But it's hot, and you're thirsty. Unfortunately, you don't know where any water is. Set off towards the east from your starting position. As you get close, you should hear a waterfall. If you run into one of your comrades, he won't have anything kind to say to you, so just give him a couple of good right hooks. That should learn 'em.

If he sticks you a couple of times with his knife, suck it up, there's a lot worse waiting for you later on. Take the knife from him and some other things (kick him once for me, you animal).

By now that babbling brook over there is probably calling out to you like the madams on R and R. Go ahead; fill the bottle up and drink it all down. It's your gut that's going to rot. Do you pick everything up and stick it in your mouth? You have to purify the water first, you *&@!%* idiot!

Go back the way you came and look for a small passage that leads to the North. There, you will find the wreckage of the ship. Walk up to the different pieces scattered about and click on them with the knife. You should come away with four or five pieces of wire. Look carefully on the ground for the Medical Kit. This will be the most important tool for your survival, so don't lose it. In there you will find Disinfection Tablets. Open the use screen. Well...use the tablet! What are you waiting for?! Someone to do it for you? Now you can drink all you want from the pond.

Keep an eye on your Sesame computer, especially your body temperature and heart rate, and the outside temperature. By taking off your pants and jacket you can keep cool. A nice hat might help to keep the sun from beating down on you all day. Go to a palm tree or a fern plant and use the knife on it. This should provide a nice supply of leaves. Then, manufacture a leaf hat from the leaves and the needle and thread. Now, put it on your head, stupid! What do you expect to do with it? Cover your geni(?)... geni(?)...genilalia? This ain't the Garden of Eden, boy (spit)!



This is the map of the Jungle region, the place where you start the game. All of the major locations are labeled, so watch out for the tigers.

There is a fruit tree next to the waterfall, but don't eat any of it.

The tigers will continue to stalk as long as they don't see you on your belly.

While you're at it, go up to a bushy tree and use the knife on it, too. This should give you some branches. Now you can make a fire to cook meat and boil water to purify it, saving those precious tablets. A good method is to sit by the water side and light the fire with the water still in view. If you're real thirsty at the end of the day, you can just sit there and drink 'til your belly is full. Just fill the gourd and hold it over the fire. That will boil it. Then repeat the process over and over.

But you can't live on water alone. Near the pond there is a fruit tree. Be careful—it might not be good to eat. Look everywhere for the Brassica Oleracea, a kind of cauliflower-looking plant. It's safe to eat and will not spoil, so try to save it as a last resort. They always grow at the base of the hills and look kind of grey.

Now walk towards the west. Far off in the distance you might seem someone. If you decide to talk to him, forget it. He's clean off his rocker. Besides, the fella is not what he appears, so be prepared to fight. There is a small passage behind him, but leave it until later. The same goes for any caves you might find.

From there, travel south (southwest corner of the map). There is a ridge that gradually slopes upward. On the plateau, there is an eagle's nest. As you head towards it, an eagle will attack you so have that knife out. When it's dead, use the knife to cut off a few hunks of meat. Continue on towards the nest where you will find an egg and as many feathers as you want. You do not have to cook the meat, just eat it while you sit next to a fire. With the feathers and the branches you can make as many arrows as you can carry. The bow will come later.

The next task should be done first thing in the morning. Go back to where the looney guy was. Get down on the ground and crawl past the tiger that is stalking there. There is a path that goes around her, but stay down the whole time or she will see you. It's impossible to fight a tiger with a knife, even for me, which spells instant death for you. Follow the path all the way south until you reach a large tree. Use the knife on it and you can get some resin. If you use the resin with the branches, you can make torches.

Crawl back to the north and watch for a path that breaks off to the west. There you will find a cave entrance. Put on all of your clothing since it will be cold and damp inside, then light a torch. There might be some nasty creatures in there that will only scratch you, but take them out quickly anyway. Watch your torch, so that you can light another one before it goes out to save on matches. You will soon find an exit that leads to another part of the planet.

THE SWAMP

The air is very misty here, making it harder to see. Make sure it is not dark, since instant death will come from some creature that only hunts at night. That is why you needed to start out early in the morning, you lazy, no good snooze-hound! Walk carefully towards the west. Some strange green creatures roam these parts. They're not too dangerous, but they attack swiftly. Soon you will find some viny willow trees. Use the knife on one and cut off some cord. Use the cord with a branch and you can make a bow. Don't worry about using it on the green fellas, save the arrows for later.

There are three ways to walk towards the west. Take the northernmost one first and then the next one down to find fruits. At the end of the third passage from the north is another one of your buddies. After talking to him, he will give you a medallion that will let the natives know you're o.k. He has some other goodies, so take him out if you want. Hey, it's every man for himself! It's your choice, though.

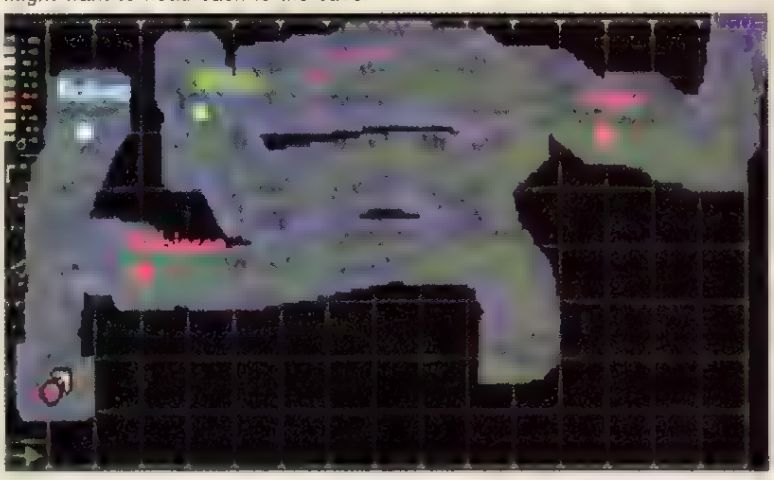
Since you might be getting thirsty and running low on water about now, you might want to head back to the cave.

The natives in the swamp look like Sinead O'Conner but fight like Grace Jones.

When you come out the other side again, stay down. Crawl to the tiger, but don't get too close or she'll see ya. Pull out your bow and take aim. Since she will be stalking, be sure to lead her a little. Steady. Now let fly! It takes two arrows to bring her down. After the first one hits, she will come at you. Be ready with another shot. You can get two pieces of skin and some meat from it. Head back to the pond and get a good rest. Now you're turning into a real soldier, soldier!

There is one more tiger in this area. To find it, head back to where the ship wreckage is. Past it is another passage leading upward and onto a plateau. Cross the natural bridge, but take it slow. One wrong step and its all over for you. On the other side crawl up close and fire. With the skins you get from the two beasts you can make some clothing. If you hold on to them until you get some more, you can make a larger article, such as a coat. If you use the needle and thread on it now, you might only end up with some boots.

Past that second tiger is another cave. Overall, you should find three cave entrances around this part of the planet, each one leading to a different climate. Most of the caves are damp, of course, and stay around 41°F. There is one, though, that gets as cold as -3°F, so be aware. Each cave also has a certain beastie that inhabits it. Some only cause superficial wounds with benign infections,



This map shows the way around the Swamp region. Not every thing is labeled, but most of it is. The rest is up to you to find.

DEHYDRATION

The biggest problem to deal with is dehydration. Your body's water level depletes at a much faster rate than the food. The one Liter water gourd is not enough for even a day's worth of exploration. One way to combat the problem is to light a fire by a water source every night before you sleep. Sit close enough so that the water and the fire are both accessible without having to move. Then repeatedly fill the gourd, boil it and drink until your water level reaches maximum capacity. Boil one more to use the next day. By doing it this way, at least you start each day filled to the gills [sorry] with water. Another way is to pay attention to the foods you eat—provided they are safe—and what affect they have on your food and water levels. Some foods are actually better for water than nutrition. Two examples are the cacti and the pumpkins found in the Desert. They both hydrate more than increase the food level, the pumpkins especially. Though the pumpkins weigh 5kg apiece, they contain a lot of water. Some regions, like the Massif, have little or no water. Be aware that you will probably have to explore these areas one day at a time. In other words, you will not be able to stay overnight there. Therefore, be prepared to have enough "juice" to get back to an area that has water so that you can camp for the night.

Nutrition

A varied diet makes for a healthy Robinson. Though meat is probably the most plentiful, it also increases your heart rate dramatically after you eat it. It is best then to save it for times when you need that extra energy boost. Meat also causes you to dehydrate faster, so vegetable matter is ideal. If you find some kind of fruit or other vegetation, go ahead and take one bite. If you get an upset stomach, pop an antispasmodic pill. If you are carrying around a sizeable amount of meat, keep an eye on its spoilage. Spoiling meat will appear separately and differently from the rest, and rotten meat will really look nasty. Vegetables will not spoil. You can fish if you like, but the process is slow and their nutritional value is only a little more than enough to keep you fishing without lowering your food level.

Hunting

The best way to kill a potentially dangerous creature is, of course, from a distance. Therefore, a bow and arrow is indispensible. If you get the laser, save it for later when you know you have to use it. Even though you can make as many arrows as you want, since there are plenty of branches and feathers, the process is a bit tedious, so use them only when you have to. If a creature only causes superficial wounds, use the knife.

others, such as bats, will poison you. There is a creature that lurks in one of the coldest caves with four arms and a nasty set of dentures. They're in the cave to the southeast. When you enter and walk to the back of it, you might think you've hit a dead end. Don't be fooled so easily, fool! Get down on that wet ground and start crawling. You should be able to find a small opening that you can squeeze through. When you come out on the other side, get ready for some action.

The multi-armed monsters won't attack until you get close enough to disturb them. Unfortunately, arrows have little effect, and taking them on hand-to-hand isn't easy since they can cut you deep. After a battle with these fellas you'll be filled with more holes than a golf course. Get that anaesthetic syringe out and start sowing up those gaping wounds. Dab a little antiseptic on for good measure.

Besides that cave, there is another one that contains potentially dangerous animals. If you walk into one and are being attacked but can't see from where, look up. There are some giant bats that are hard to get a hit on. Be wary of poisoning from these fellas. If you get a scratch and the scanner shows a part of your body as blinking, make haste. Break out that poison-aspirator and then stick yourself with a syringe filled with anti-venom serum. Don't forget to strap on a tourniquet before you use the serum.

Although there are a number of hostile and hungry creatures in every part of the planet, your biggest adversary will be your own body. First and foremost is dehydration. No matter what the climate, you will always seem to run out of water first. Since you only have a one liter gourd (10 drinks) to carry water around in, you don't have much time before you need to replenish your supply. Salt helps slow it down a bit. There is a small village on a plateau in the desert region where you can find a large three Liter gourd (30 drinks). The natives won't give it up that easily, though. They attack with spears and some interesting tactics.

When you are spotted, they won't run directly at you, letting you get a free shot. They run in a zig-zag pattern, making them harder to hit. Wait until they get close enough—to the point where they have to run straight at you. Then let some arrows fly. After you've killed one of them, pick up their spear and use it on the rest. Nothing like fighting fire with...with a taste of its own medicine, that's what I always say.

Besides the natives in the desert, there are some other beasts to watch out for. Giant poisonous spiders are easy to spot from a distance and go down pretty easy. But don't let them get too close or you'll be sucking venom out of your arm again. Your best bet is to nail them with one good spear thrown from a short distance.

There are also some unfriendly buffalo grazing in a field. If they see you, they'll charge and knock some sense into you for a short period. Then when you come to, they'll come at you again. You'll keep getting knocked until your bones are crushed to a fine powder. Arrows will not hurt these big palookas, so you'll need a laser pistol to take them on, which you'll have to borrow from one of your buddies.

When you come out of one of the caves you might find yourself in the Massif. Immediately, you will be greeted by laser fire from one of those guys who thinks you're a jerk. Hit the deck and try to crawl up close to him. He runs around quite a bit so it's hard to get a shot. Have plenty of arrows made and don't forget to lead him well. It only takes one hit to bring him down. When you're through with him, though, you won't be done yet. There is a field with four tigers relaxing in it. Use the same method on them and take them out one by one. Be sure to crawl around them in a way that while you are sneaking up on one, another doesn't see you and attack. If two come at you the same time, forget it. Be patient, because when you're through there will be plenty of skins and meat for the takin'.

Past the tigers is a large lake with a raft parked on the shore. Explore the whole area on it, and look for the artichoke plants especially. There are plenty to go around and they make for some good eatin'. At the southernmost part of the lake is a cave entrance that can only be entered by water. There are two paths to follow. On of them leads to an area that you can get sulfur from, and the other winds up at the top of a waterfall. As far as I could tell there is no way down it, even though your map detects a Sesame computer at a far end of it. Don't despair, there may be another way.

Well, if I told you any more I'd be leading you by the hand, and we don't want that do we? You need to learn to be a Robinson on your own. If you follow your instincts and use all of your resources properly, you'll get off the planet. Pay close attention to your dreams since they will give some clues about what to do and expect. Good luck. You'll need it!

-Tasos Kaiafas

The Beginning

Tropical Forest (start)

Foods: fish, meat, Brassica Oleracea (cauliflower), egg
Wild Life: Tigers, Eagle, Robinson
Places of Interest: lake w/waterfall, caves
Acquirable Items: Medical kit, wire, skins, leaves, branches, feathers, resin, worms, matches, battery

Swamps

Foods: meat, grapes, melons, milk
Wild Life: green creatures, natives, stegosaurs, poisonous plants
Places of Interest: village, friendly Robinson
Acquirable Items: vines (cord), branches, leaves, medallion

Massif

Foods: artichokes, meat, water, fruit
Wild Life: Tigers, Natives
Places of Interest: water cave, village, lake
Acquirable Items: skins, branches, leaves, spears

Desert

Foods: pumpkins, meat, water, potatoes, cactus, mushrooms
Wild Life: buffalo, giant spiders, natives, vulture
Places of Interest: village, friendly comrade, cave
Acquirable Items: branches, leaves, 3 liter gourd, spears

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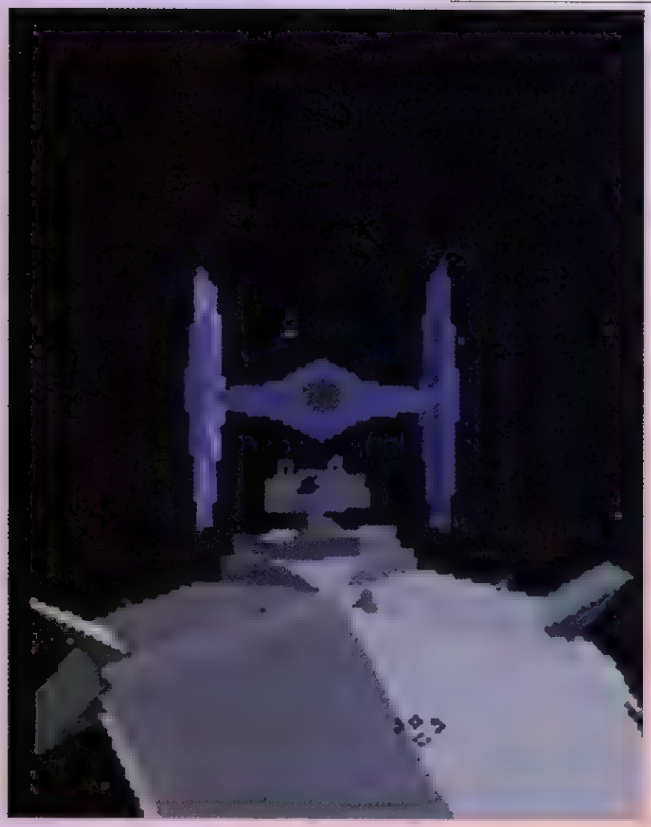


BATTLING THE REBELLION IN A SMALL IMPERIAL DEATHTRAP. . .

HOW THE TIE FIGHTER PILOTS KEEP FROM BEING TURNED INTO SO MUCH SPACE JUNK WHEN THE EMPIRE SEES THEM AS EXPENDABLE.

TECH SPECS

Requirements:
386/33, VGA, DOS 5 or better, 2MB RAM

Sound Support:
Sound Blaster, Roland, Pro Audio Spectrum

Controller:
Joystick, Mouse, Keyboard

Available for:
PC and compatibles

Designed by:
LucasArts

Distributed by:
LucasArts

GAME SUMMARY

Jump behind the controls of a half dozen of the Empire's finest ships as you seek to restore order and kick the stuffing out of the annoying Rebellion. Seven battles, each with multiple missions await.

The important thing to remember when playing TIE Fighter is that you are not flying an X-Wing class ship. Of all the ships you fly in the game, only half will have shields. Your primary ships, especially in the first few battles, will be TIE Fighters TIE Bombers and TIE Interceptors, all of which fly without shields. Get used to the idea that anyone targeting you at all is a threat that must be dealt with immediately. You cannot run the risk of a lucky shot destroying all of the work you have put into a mission.

The following pages will give some brief overall hints for successfully flying a TIE craft, as well as some general hints for the training runs and historical missions. More time will be spent covering the specific missions of the first few battles. All hints will be given for the hard level of difficulty. If you are playing on a lower setting, you'll have the advantage of having an easier time of things.

A-Wings will be your toughest challenge from the Rebellion.

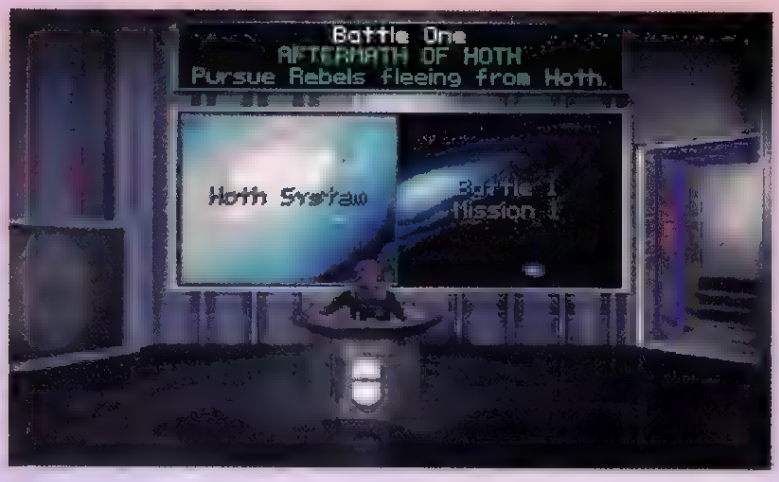
TRAINING MISSIONS

Unlike the training missions in X-Wing, the tunnels you fly to learn the various strengths of the TIE craft are quick and relatively painless. For one thing, nothing shoots at you. When flying through the tunnels in a ship with shielding, you can drop your shields to minimum and lasers to full without sacrificing speed. In a non-shielded ship, this is no benefit, but you will not have anything to dodge. Hitting a wall or object in the tunnels brings you to a complete stop. Be aware of this. You only need to complete four levels to be cleared on a given ship, but a decent pilot should be able to clear at least eight for each craft. Also, the spokes that appear in the tunnels take increasingly more shots to destroy as you progress in levels. This reverts back to just two shots around level ten.

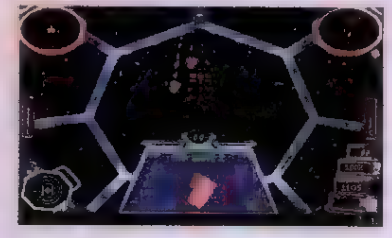
Use these training missions to gain a better feel for the nuance of each ship. The ships do have their own differences, and you will need to be able to adapt to each one. The big difference is in the targeting; Gunboats, with their chin-mounted twin lasers target very differently from Interceptors, with their quad-mounted spread. Learning these nuances will mean the difference between life and death when you hit space.

HISTORICAL MISSIONS

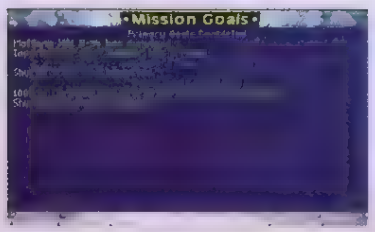
If you've played X-Wing, you should fly the historicals to get an even better feel for the ships. If you haven't played X-Wing, these missions will take you through the various systems of your ship and will show you step by step how to affect your speed, how to attack, how to target and more. While important for all pilots, the initial missions for each ship are critical for the new pilot, as much of the tutorial nature of these missions is included in missions 1 and 2 for each craft. Do not fly in any of the battles until you have taken the time to fly at least three historical missions for each of the five ships you start the game with. Test your strategies here.



The first battle involves the Imperial pursuit of the Rebellion as the remnants of the Rebel outpost flees for safer space. At times, this battle is a duck shoot.



Work into the blind spot on the Corvettes for an easy time knocking them out.



The goals of mission two are simple to remember but tough to complete. . .

Battle 1, Mission 1

This mission starts quite simply. You are out on patrol with the simple goal of identifying passing ships. This mission takes place right after the Imperial invasion of the Rebel base on Hoth. If you wish, you can simply identify the five Freighters in group Onece and the two Transports designated Dayta and return to the platform. However, you will discover that Onece 3 holds Rebels: attack it, lowering its shields to zero. A group of Shuttles will hyper in, take them on while your Transports disable the Onece 3 and capture it. After the Shuttle group Ravtin goes down, an Escort Shuttle group called Tough and a Transport called Glitch will enter. Both of these must be destroyed for your bonus goals to be complete. Avoid Tough as much as possible, taking potshots when you can, letting your other ships do the bulk of the dirty work. Attacking Escort Shuttles is difficult, since the rear-mounted turret makes the standard anti-Shuttle tactic (get behind and start shooting) very dangerous. The Glitch should be no problem.

When the Toughs are going down, target and identify Corellian Transport group Yander and Container Transport Taloos. Don't fire on them!

Medium difficulty—The Ravtin will be called Roe. Escort Shuttle group Tough will be replaced by Shuttle group Escro. There are no bonus goals on this difficulty level.

Easy difficulty—As with medium, Ravtin is called Roe and Tough is replaced by Shuttle group Escro. There are no bonus goals, and the Yander and Taloos groups do not enter the mission.

Battle 1, Mission 2

The object of this mission is to protect your space platform until the Star Destroyer Hammer hypers in. The opposition will be mainly Y-Wings with some X-Wings thrown in here and there. Your TIE Fighter is equipped with 4 concussion missiles.

In a mission like this, you cannot complete your primary objectives until the Hammer enters, so you should do what you can to complete your secondary and bonus goals. Your secondary goal is to inspect the Shuttle Scutz, and one of the bonus goals is to capture it. Your other bonus is to destroy the Corvette group Ubote.

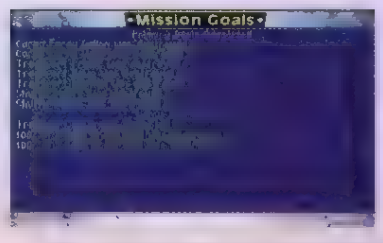
Dogfight the X- and Y-Wings, moving from ship to ship. The platform will not ever be in serious danger. When the Hammer shows up, the enemy starfighters will depart, and around the time the Scutz is captured, the Ubote group will hyper in. Hang back from these, telling your wingmen to attack one of them. Fire your missiles at one Corvette, then settle in behind it, trying to get into its blind spot. Maximize laser recharge, match speed and unlink your lasers to give you the best chance of scoring the kill shot. Hopefully, the Corvettes will be spending a lot of time shooting at other Imperial ships and will ignore you.

Medium and easy difficulty—The goals are the same, the main differences being the number of enemy ships and the quality of the Rebel pilots.

Battle 1, Mission 3

This is pretty much a seek-and-destroy mission. Your primary goal is to prevent the Rebels from getting their supplies into hyperspace. You will be in a Bomber and will be armed with 12 proton torpedoes.

Your first priority should be to destroy either the Cargo Ferry Gallon or Wess. Take your pick, switch to torpedoes, lock on and fire four of them. Do the same with the other Cargo Ferry. Then hunt out the Transport called Dawn and inspect it for a completed bonus goal. Once it's inspected, start blowing things up. Just target your nearest enemy and shoot them down. You will more than likely discover that one of the Transports or Shuttles has slipped past your fighters, but by dropping lasers to minimum and targeting with torpedoes, you should have little problem catching it before it gets away into hyperspace.



. . .while the next mission has more goals more easily accomplished.

Further into the mission, B-Wing Gold and X-Wing Red will hyper in. Destroy these two groups to finish your bonus goals. Use torpedoes on single fire after the Cargo Ferries are gone.

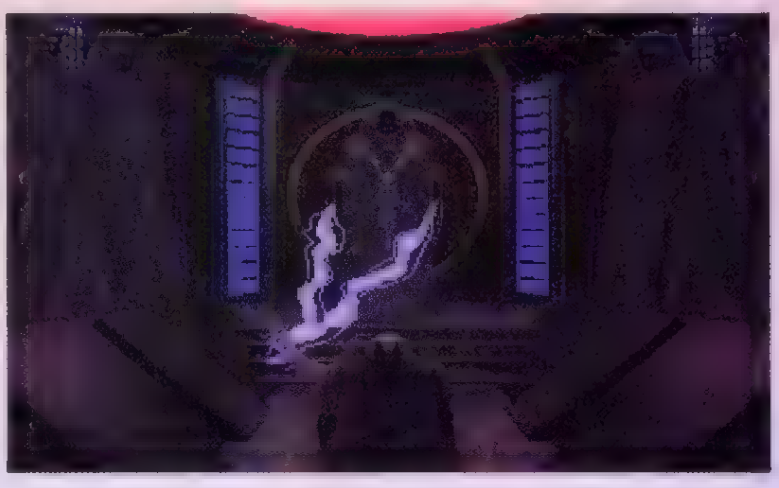
Medium difficulty—Inspecting the Dawn is the only bonus goal. Cargo Ferries Romold and Kann are added to your primary mission goals. To deal with this, send your wingmen at one and destroy the other three with four torpedoes each.

Easy difficulty—Like the hard level, the easy difficulty includes just two Cargo Ferries. Like the medium level, the bonus goals are limited to simply inspecting the Dawn.

Battle 1, Mission 4

Like mission 3, this is a fun one. The Rebels have captured an Imperial platform. You will spearhead the attack to recapture it. You will fly in an Interceptor; your job is to clear the area of enemy starfighters.

The primary goals are simple. Your Frigate, the Fogger, must survive the bat-



Perform at peak efficiency and you will be inducted into the Emperor's Circle. After your initiation, the ceremony changes.

Flying Sans Shields

While this can be something of a problem to the uninitiated, you can get used to flying without shields quickly. The main difference is how you approach enemy fire.

As soon as you see the red or green lights on you targeting display, you know you are being targeted by either a starfighter (red) or a capital ship (green). When you see these lights, start dodging. You cannot fly into the face of enemy ships like you can in a Gunboat or TIE Advanced. Don't try!

When attacking a capital ship in a TIE, T/Bomber or T/Interceptor, the chances are good that the capital ship will be targeting you. One tactic you may wish to try is targeting the enemy ships' gun turrets. The benefits are obvious; the more guns you destroy, the less you get shot at. It is possible to entirely denude one side of a capital ship of weaponry, allowing you to simply match speed and fire at will. This can be dangerous, though, since attacking a specific gun will line you up in their sights and make you an easy target.

The other possible tactic for attacking larger ships when you do not have shields is to simply line up the ship, take a couple of shots, and then fly in a random pattern for a couple of seconds. Corvettes are easy to attack this way, since you can literally fly between the shots, hit it a few times and then peel off.

ORDNANCE

One of the benefits to being a high-ranking pilot in the Empire is that you will have the opportunity to choose your own missile weapons when you fly ships that can carry them. To choose them wisely, you should best know what each one will do and when each will be best suited for your mission. In some cases, more advanced types of a particular weapon will become available. When they do, use them in place of the more mundane versions.

Concussion missiles are best suited for missions in which you will be dogfighting constantly. While they lack the punch of the other types of ordnance, they are very quick.

Proton Torpedoes are an excellent mid-range weapon. You can carry a good amount and they hit hard. Take these when you have to go against a number of larger ships like Shuttles and Transports. They are also useful in missions where enemy starfighters appear some distance away.

Heavy rockets won't be used much. They pack a good punch, but are not equal to the bombs.

The space bombs are slow and easy to target and it's hard to carry many of them. They make up for this by being incredibly destructive. Use these when you have one major ship; a Frigate or Cruiser for instance, to take down. They can't be beat for that.

tle, the platform must be captured and the Transport Sigma must complete its docking operation. All of these goals will be finished simultaneously. Use the time to take out any enemy ships, paying particularly close attention to those that attack the Fogger. One of your bonus goals will be to destroy at least one ship from Escort Shuttle group Claf. To do so, simply stay a couple of klicks away and use your concussion missiles. After the Claf group is destroyed, make a beeline for the Cargo Transport Gopher. Inspect it and hit it with four missiles to weaken its shields. A Transport will be released to disable and board it (your last bonus goal). Re-enter the main battle until all of the Rebel ships are gone. Don't leave until all of your goals are completed, since Rebel ships should stop entering the area.

Medium and easy difficulty—Goals are the same, simply the skill of the pilots being different. The other main difference is that you do not need to be as proactive about inspecting the Gopher since it will not head for hyperspace as quickly on an easier level of difficulty.

BATTLE 1, MISSION 5

This mission is straight combat. You are in a Gunboat and have a heavy cargo of concussion missiles. It might be tempting to trade them out for another type of missile, but don't. The concussion missiles will be perfect for the task ahead.

Your initial problem is going to be the A-Wings. Take them out initially with linked missiles and a linked laser hit. When they get in close, try using your ion cannons to disable them. You need to hit them less often, and the cannons do a lot of damage to their shields. Once they are disabled, you can destroy them at your

MX designated mines will both shoot lasers and fire missiles at you.

leisure. If you can, try to inspect Cargo Container C group C440, but don't jeopardize the mission to do it. Remember that Rebel ships can hyper out, and if a ship from X-Wing Red, A-Wing Red or B-Wing Gold does so, the mission is a scratch.

Your bonus goals are to destroy X-Wing Blue, another group of X-Wing Red and A-Wing Gold. Don't miss the chance to take out the Transports if they are close.

Medium difficulty—X-Wing Red doesn't re-enter the mission. Otherwise, the goals are the same. You'll simply have an easier time of things.

Easy difficulty—As medium, and A-Wing Red does not appear. Because of this, you might want to consider a proton torpedo loadout instead of the concussion missiles, as protons will be much more useful against X- and B-Wings. Just be careful about A-Wing Gold that still appears as a bonus goal.

BATTLE 1, MISSION 6

The end of the first battle is the wildest dogfight you've been in up to this point in TIE Fighter, and one of the most intense of the game. The object of the mission is to destroy the Calamari Cruiser Lulsla, with secondary missions of destroying two Transport groups and disabling a Shuttle from the Derris group. The bonus goals are to capture the disable Shuttle and to destroy the twelve groups of mines that ring the Lulsla. In addition to these goals, the Cruiser will be spitting out starfighters to deal with. You are in a Gunboat.

First things first; trade out the missiles for proton torpedoes. You won't be able to carry as many of them, but they will do more damage than the concussion missiles. You will more than likely fire them all at the Lulsla anyway, so do as much damage as you can. If you wish, you can even go with heavy rockets or the space bombs. They both do incredible damage, but are easier to shoot down, and in the case of rockets, need to be launched from relatively close by. Experiment to find what you like best.

Your only hope to survive this mission is to get in to the thick of things, keep moving and keep the shield charged up. Transfer all of your laser energy to shields and keep the laser recharge on full. Every few seconds, transfer a notch of laser power to shields, and keep the shield strength distributed. At the start of the mission, after you launch everything at the Lulsla, target the closest mine and wade into battle.

Watch for the RQ designated mines. They are harder to hit, and in addition to firing lasers, they launch concussion missiles. If you have a choice, take them out in favor of the other mines and even the enemy starfighters.

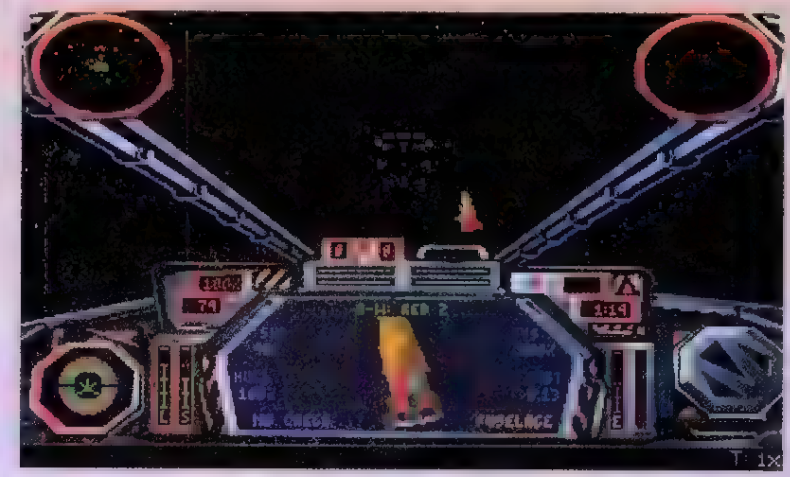
Once the starfighters enter the fray, target your closest enemy (mines will now appear as enemies) and go for it. If your target is a starfighter and you fly by a mine, take a potshot at it. If you miss, no big loss. If you hit, it's one less thing to fire at you.

Don't sweat about the Derris group. True, disabling and capturing the group is a secondary and bonus goal, but the chances are very good that you are going to be too busy to be able to disengage and go after them. Let them go. Do try to get the Transport groups Gargon and Starway, though.

Finally, keep an eye on the Lulsla. When the shields are down, you can ease the laser barrage by targeting it and hitting it with four linked shots of supercharged ion cannons. Then destroy it at your leisure.

Medium difficulty--Mine group MX-F is replaced by MX-A. Groups RQ-A, RQ-C and RQ-G do not appear.

Easy difficulty--Only mine groups MX-C, MX-E, RQ-B and RQ-E appear.



When in a Gunboat and fighting against the maneuverable A-Wings, try knocking them out with ion cannons before hitting them with your lasers.

Note that this Dimok craft is carrying Imperial goods. Curious. . .

Battle 2, Mission 1

Battle 2 revolves around the Imperial involvement in a civil war occurring between the Ripoblus and Dimok people on the planet Sepan. The Empire, of course, is not going to take sides in the issue, but is merely trying to keep the peace between the two sides. In this initial mission, it is your task to protect a Ripoblus convoy from Dimok attack. You are in a TIE Fighter, and can expect Y-Wings and Z-95 Headhunters.

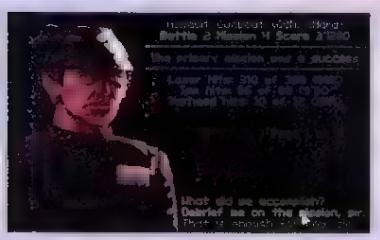
Your goals here are simple; you must destroy at least 25% of the Dimok attack force and at least one member of the Asbo Modular Convoy group must survive the battle.

Your secondary mission goal is to inspect the Asbo group. Do so quickly, and you will find that one of them is carrying Imperial arms. Lock this into one of your target locations and protect it at all costs. Capturing it will be one of your bonus goals. Additional bonus goals include having the two Transports finish their missions and the destruction of the Light Calamari Cruiser Falaricae. Good luck on that goal!

You will more than likely discover that a Dimok Corvette will take out one of the Asbo craft. As long as it isn't the one carrying the Imperial arms, you can let it do so. While it is busy, you can switch your lasers to single fire and take it on. You'll have a good chance of being credited with the kill.

Finally, remember that the Dimok craft appear on your scanner as purple and the Ripoblus craft are light blue. Don't attack the Ripoblus!

Medium and easy difficulty—As hard, with fewer, less able ships.



Shoot carefully (note the percentages) for the best score possible.

Battle 2, Mission 2

To prove that the Empire is not taking sides in the Sepan Civil War, this time you are to defend the Dimoks against a retaliation attack launched by the Ripoblus. You'll be in a Bomber.

Like the last mission, the main goal is to destroy 25% of the enemy craft. You also need to protect the Platform XQ1 Youst as well as an unidentified Container C of group Lab Module. The problem is that the Ripoblus craft are not starfighters, they are bigger ATRs capable of swatting you like a fly. Use your torpedoes—three of them on each of two Ripoblus craft. Send your wingmen at a third.

As the melee continues, inspect the Lab Module group and the Platform Youst. You'll discover one of the containers holds weapons, an interesting cargo outside of a science station! This is the container you need to protect, and for a bonus goal, capture. You'll also want to capture the Platform. Transports Epsilon 1 and 2 will fly to accomplish these objectives. Protect them, and if possible, lend some support to your flagship, which should defeat the Frigate Dromon, another bonus goal of yours. Finally, when it flies by, inspect the Shuttle Toten for your last bonus goal.

Don't look for a very high point score on this mission. Beyond your first two kills and your inspection duties, much of this mission will be spent avoiding enemy fire.

Medium and easy difficulty—Like the previous mission, the main differences are number of enemy ships and the quality of the pilots.

Battle 2, Mission 3

A group or Ripoblus refugees has stolen a ship and is now seeking asylum in the Empire. You must protect their ship until it can dock with an Imperial craft and the refugees can be taken to safety. You will engage enemy forces in an Interceptor. Unlike the previous two missions, both those you seek to protect and those who will attack you will be Ripoblus.

The refugee ship docking is your only primary mission and you have no secondary goals. Bonus goals are to destroy the Escort Shuttle group Typhon and for the group Nazaar to finish its mission. Your primary targets will be Ripoblus Y-Wings. Get behind them, match speed and start shooting. You might want to keep your lasers on single-fire, as this will allow you to dispatch enemy fighters more quickly. You have no missiles, so the Typhon group will prove rather perilous. Send your wingmen after them and try to attack from distance. Never take more than the equivalent of two quad-linked shots at the shuttles without peeling off and going for another attack run. Quad-linked is your best bet against these ships, as the amount of massed damage you will cause more than makes up for the slow rate of fire. Of course, you can simply avoid this group if the bonus goal is not important to you.

If you lose your radar screens, you can use the map to target a ship.

The chances are very good that the Glas will be disabled by enemy ships. This is fine as long as it isn't destroyed.

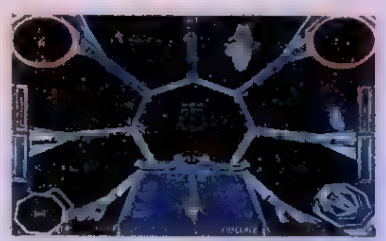
Make sure that you use the target nearest enemy feature when looking for another ship to attack, since every ship that isn't an Imperial craft will be Ripoblus, and your superiors would not be pleased if you inadvertently whack one of the good guys.

Medium and easy difficulty—The goals remain the same, with ship number and quality making the mission less difficult. Additionally, you will have more time before new enemy groups hyper in and more time will pass before enemy ships attack the Glas.

Battle 2, Mission 4

The Ripoblus and Dimok have teamed up, seeing the Empire as a greater threat than each other. You must help capture the two Shuttles that hold their leaders.

This is one of the more difficult missions around. Target either the Keydon or the Phantele and send your wingmen at it. In the meantime, drop your lasers and shields to minimum and go as fast as you can toward the Escort Shuttle pair Arabu.



Y-Wings make fun targets for any TIE ship. Just match speed and start shooting!

Attacking Capital Ships

As indicated earlier, you are better off avoiding the strong capital ships if you are in a shieldless craft. The exception, of course, is if you are armed with some sort of ordnance strong enough to destroy the capital ship in question.

The following advice is intended for use in situations where the enemy capital ships are your only opponents. Do not try this with enemy starfighters on the prowl!

When you start making your approach, it's a good idea to turn your lasers and shields down to their standard configuration. While this will prevent your lasers from recharging, you will be sweeping in and flying back out. The chances of you using up your laser charge is very slim, and the added speed will make you harder to hit and will pull you out of danger more quickly.

From about 1.5 klicks, start shooting and weaving. After every few shots, you should change course to avoid the incoming laser fire.

Once you get in close, start looking for the turbo laser turrets and other gun emplacements. Unlink your lasers and start shooting them.

When you've taken some damage, pull out and put your shields full rear. Transfer laser power into the shields and fly out until you are out of range. Realign your shields, cut your speed and fully recharge lasers and shields.

TIE Defender

The mystery ship of TIE Fighter is the awesome TIE Defender, the most powerful starfighter available to either the Rebellion or the Empire. This ship combines the speed and maneuverability of the TIE Advanced with the shield strength of a Victory Class Star Destroyer and the firepower of a Gunboat. It's the fastest ship available in the game, capable of speeds of 234 kph.

The triple-winged Defender appears in the final Battle of TIE Fighter, and it will be your craft to fly for two missions. Once the ship is available for your use, the training ground and four historical missions will be opened up for you. To really see the capabilities of the T/D, in the training ground put all energy to the engines for a ride you won't forget!

To prove to yourself that the T/D is the ultimate combat craft, try the first historical mission in which you take on starfighter after starfighter.

Finally, to help get the most performance out of the ship, you will notice that it comes with a tractor beam weapon. This is all but useless in combat, so you can eke extra speed and power out of the ship by dropping the power on this device to zero. You can continue on at the same speed with your lasers on full recharge.

It is hoped that any further mission disks for TIE Fighter will feature extensive use of this incredible ship.

Target the first Arabu with missiles, or, if you had the foresight to load them, proton torpedoes (highly recommended for this mission). When it comes in range, kill your speed by increasing laser and shield recharge rates to the maximum. Knock out both of the Arabu craft, then drop shield and laser recharge rates again and head back to protect the Omega Transport group. Once there, don't forget to recharge your various systems.

Once the initial threat to this group has been taken care of, the mission is pretty much downhill. Identify the ships listed in your secondary missions as well as the Light Calamari Cruiser Falaricae and the Nebulon B-2 Frigates Manus Ferre and Shemsher.

Medium and easy difficulty—Less skilled enemy pilots and less diligent attacks upon your craft make the mission easier.

Battle 2, Mission 5

The final mission in the second battle has you flying a TIE Fighter. A shipment of TIE Advanced is being sent to your flagship by the Tropsobor. You must protect the T/A groups AA, AB, AC and AD. At least 75% of the ships must make it successfully, and the Tropsobor must hyper out.

You are fortunate to be protecting ships as capable of handling themselves as the TIE Advanced. They may receive some enemy fire, but they should not have a problem making it to safety. Four of your five bonus goals are for entire wings of TIE Advanced making it to your flagship safely. This should prove no problem.

You will have a much more difficult time protecting the Tropsobor from enemy ships. While a group of Z-95 Headhunters attacks the TIE Advanced shipments, groups of Y-Wings will start going after the Tropsobor. This ship can take care of itself for some time, but it's a good idea to send your wingmen after the Y-Wings while you finish off the Headhunters. Once the Headhunters are gone, target the closest Y-Wing and head into the fray.

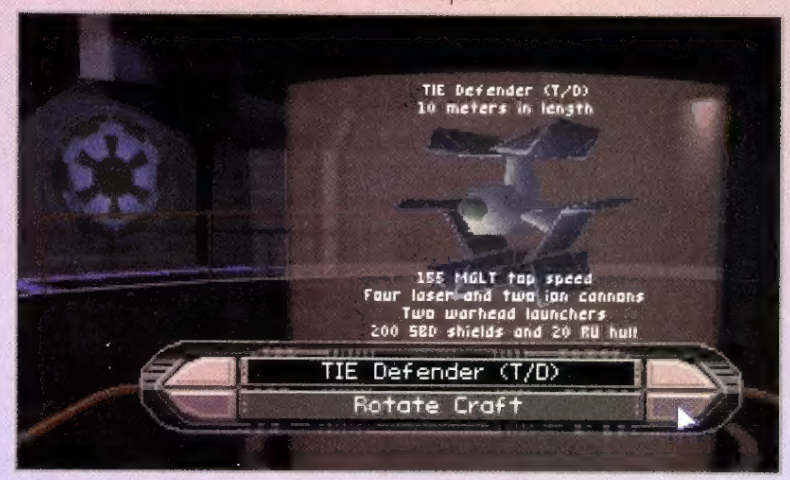
Once the starfighters are gone, you'll still have the Light Calamari Cruiser Ben Het and the Corvette Long Tam to destroy. Go after the Corvette first, with your wingmen attacking the Ben Het. Get

You'll get a mixed response to your initiative on the final mission in Battle 2.

into the Corvette's blind spot and you should have little difficulty destroying it. The Ben Het is a different case. Destroying it is important to your last bonus goal, since that goal is to destroy all Dimok and Ripoblus craft in the mission. If you really want to take it out, call for back up.

When you get the alert that a Shuttle has entered the area, target it and identify it as quickly as possible. It's making a beeline for your Victory Star Destroyer. When you do get it identified, you'll get an interesting mixed message from your commanders.

Medium and easy difficulty--As with the other four missions in this battle, your secondary and bonus goals remain the same. The major difficulty difference is in the ferocity of attack on the ships you must protect, especially the Tropsobor.


TIE Defender (T/D)
10 meters in length
155 MGLT top speed
Four laser and two ion cannons
Two warhead launchers
200 SBD shields and 20 HU hull
TIE Defender (T/D)
Rotate Craft

The TIE Defender is a strange-looking craft, but you will quickly learn the benefits of flying it. It is one of the strongest ships, including Star Destroyers, in the universe.

General Tactics

When you've got them, ion cannons are your best friends. Nothing quiets down a capital ship like a burst of ion cannons. Consider this: once you've knocked out the shields of a capital ship, you've got to break through either 100% of the hull or 100% of the systems energy. Knowing that knocking out the hull will take multiple passes and that taking out the systems will require one pass with supercharged ion cannons, the time savings alone become apparent.

Using ion cannons before destroying capital ships has an additional benefit as well. When the ship's hull is finally breached, you will note that it continues to fire at you until it is destroyed. If it is disabled, it will no longer be able to fire, and this problem is alleviated.

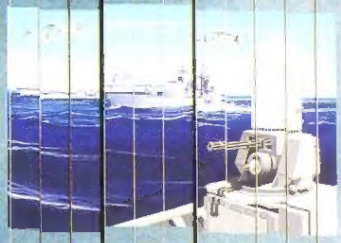
If you aren't sure of what your bonus goals on a given mission are, try inspecting all non-starfighter craft in the mission. If discovering all of the bonus goals is important to you, one way to do it is to play the game with two pilots. With the first, simply accomplish your primary goals and end the mission. Then enter the combat chamber, and select the battle and mission you just flew. Since it is now a historical mission, it will list all of your primary, secondary and bonus goals. Now you know for the next time you fly that mission.

Additionally, realize that many of the bonus goals are nearly impossible to achieve. Goals like taking out Calamari Cruisers when you are in a TIE Fighter are going to be impossible without help. Calling for back up dramatically reduces the number of points you receive for a given mission, but the additional help may allow you to complete all of your goals and score a few extra kills.

When attacking ships that cannot fire behind them, match speed when you get on their blind side. Just remember to increase your speed back to maximum before you target another ship and try to track it down. Keep your shields charged up and try to have your lasers stay supercharged. ***-Steve Honeywell***

The T/D cockpit is pretty standard. Note the tractor beam readout at bottom right.

WE REGRET THE APPEARANCE OF THIS AD, BUT THE MILITARY INFORMATION IN THIS NEW GAME HAS ONLY RECENTLY BEEN DECLASSIFIED.



Otherwise, we'd have to ask you to eat the evidence for security reasons.

For a real taste of military action, try leading a navy fleet through heavy Exocet missile attacks in the Falkland War. Or defending against torpedo strikes in the Persian Gulf.

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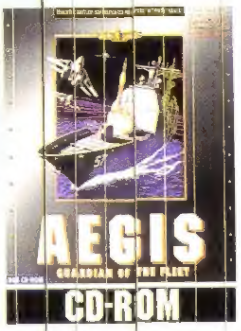

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